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THE INDIAN IDEAL OF MARRIAGE

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A request has come to me from Europe to say something about the Indian idea of marriage. This puts me in mind of the difference between the European and the Indian idea,—a difference which is not merely of outer method, but of inner purpose.

Like all distinctive features of civilised societies, the marriage system is an attempt at compromise between the biological purposes of Nature and the sociological purposes of Man; and both its outer form and inner aim depends upon the divergence between these two. For, in his individual as well as in his social life, man is governed by this Diarchy.

Thus, where society is complex with a net-work of widely-ramified relationships, the natural propensities have to be kept in check by social pressure from every side. While, where wants are numerous and their supply difficult, and man is compelled to venture forth to distant places to make a living, there the social obligations need must be light, and the nature and extent of the mutual claims of individuals over one another cannot be rigidly prescribed by society, but must be left to be adjusted by the individuals themselves.

It is a matter of comment by Europeans that we use no word like "thanks" in our own language, for expressing gratitude; and they jump to the conclusion that our character must be free from that troublesome feeling. But the fact is, that in our society the obligation of the giver of help is held to be stronger than that of the recipient. On him who has acquired learning

is cast the duty of giving to others,—that is not taken as a favour done by teacher to student. The offering of hospitality even to the casual visitor, is incumbent on the householder for his own sake. Each of the domestic ceremonies, from the birth-celebration to the funeral, is but an expression of the debt which each member owes to his community. From this it becomes evident that our society is not like a stream on which its members float in comparative freedom, but like the earth in whose depths their root-system is held secure.

The Aryans of India were at first forest dwellers. Then as the dense screen of forest was lifted off the stage of their history, India's broad, river-served plains were converted from sylvan shelters of patriarchal communities into monarchical territories; and agriculture became the mainstay of her growing settlements. On the one hand, the close neighbourhood of peoples, racially different, giving rise to perpetual cultural conflict; and, on the other, the agricultural civilisation claiming co-operation and the complex regulations of stable life,—these are the two forces that moulded Hindu society and still guide its course. Such a society can never exist and perform its functions unless peace is maintained amongst its members by a perfect system of mutual adjustment of rights.

In the beginning of India's history, of which we gain glimpses in the Rámáyana, three different parties are to be distinguished,—the Aryans, the barbarians (variously called monkeys, bears, etc.) and the powerful, cultured Rákshasas. While all these were at daggers drawn, their constant dissensions precluded the establishment of any common social polity. Then, as the conquering Kshatriyas extended their sway, and populous settlements grew up in their wake, the need for peace was felt and its merits were exalted. So, broadly speaking, the establishment of relationships between the Aryans, the barbarians and the Rákshasas, form the main theme of the Rámáyana.

Courage, in the ethics of Peace, means the courage of self-sacrifice; there, bravery has for its object the triumph of Renunciation. And, in societies where such sacrifice and renunciation are cultivated, not the individual but the household is the primary unit, and such household is broad, not narrow in

conception and content. That is why, as the Rámáyana evolves from a collection of ballads into an epic, its main function is transformed from a narration of struggles against the outrages offered to the cult of tillage (*sîtá*) into the exaltation of the Ethics of the Household. The unfaltering strength of self-renunciation which is needful for keeping true the varied relations between king and subject, father and son, brother and brother, husband and wife, master and servant, and among neighbours different in colour and character,—that is what it really glorifies.

Wherever many men have congregated, not for the purpose of attacking others, but for mutual benefit, there is evolved a mentality which eventually transcends all considerations of expediency and envisages Supreme Good as an absolute fulfilment. And so, in our country, there was a day when the household was glorified, not as a comfortable home, not as the enjoyment of proprietary right, but as the means of living the fullest communal life, and through it of attaining supreme liberation at the end.

The intimacy of relationship with wife and child is but natural, and so may hardly help to loosen the bonds of self,—rather it serves to strengthen them. But the household wherein even the most distant of kinsmen have a recognised right, where one's own earnings have to be shared by those who are almost strangers, where it is a matter of shame and censure if differences be made between near and distant relations,—there the claims of moral welfare override those of natural affection, and give rise to certain special qualities of heart. These gradually grow so powerful that both the individual as well as the social conscience refuse to tolerate any personal claims when these conflict with those of the household *dharma*.

Therefore the home of the Indian has never been looked upon as his castle, the place where he is lord and master. No doubt the duty, there cast on him, of considering the rights of others on any and every occasion, has involved him in expenditure of time and money, but his accounts have ever been cast up, not in terms of self-interest, but of social and spiritual welfare.

In societies where the household is founded on the comfort and convenience of the individual, his acceptance or non-

acceptance of the householders' estate remains optional. If any such should say that he does not care for domestic joys, but prefers the freedom of irresponsibility, no room for objection is left. But in Hindu India, because the household is an essential element in its social structure, marriage is almost compulsory,—like conscription in Europe on the threat of war.

According to our Lawgivers, anyone making gifts to, or taking gifts from, a Brahmin who remains a householder, but does not marry, goes to hell. Says Atri: "No hospitality should be accepted from an unmarried householder." The household has been compared, in our *shástras,* to a great tree; for, just as the roots of the latter support its branches, twigs and foliage, so does the life of the household maintain the different institutions of society; and the Lawgiver lays it down that the King should do honour to the upholder of the householders' estate. But the mere fact of setting up a household, anyhow, does not constitute that estate according to our *shástras* :

Grihasthopi kriyáyukto na grihena grihásramî,
Na chaiva putradárena svakarma parivarjita.

Not by the house is made the household, but by the performance of the householders' duties,—nor even by wife and children, if the householder be wanting in his own karma.

Karma here does not mean the looking after his family interests, but the performance of his specific duty,—the fulfilment of his obligation to society.

Tathá tathaiva káryáni na kálastu vidhîyate,
Asminneva prayuñjáno hyasminneva tu lîyate

With society are we connected, in it do we terminate this life, therefore should we do our duty as it arises, and not await our own convenience.

To perform the duties of a householder is in fact looked upon as a spiritual discipline. Says Vasistha :

Grihastha eva yajate grihasthastapyate tapah,
Chaturnámásramánántu grihasthastu vishishyate.

That is to say, because the life of a householder is a life of self-abnegation having its manifold obligations to gods and men,

therefore of all the four *ásramas*, the *ásrama* or estate of the householder is specially distinguished.

In societies where the household is but the means of ensuring the comfort and security of the individual, the notion of property also becomes intensely individualistic; for the right of property is at the base of the householders' estate. And when property is viewed as dedicated to individual enpoyment, it ceases as such to be a joy to the others who own it not, but becomes rather an object of their envy. Not only that, but in the process of its acquisition the question of social or moral welfare is lost sight of, and the spirit of rivalry and competition acknowledges no limit. And so, in ancient India, the class of merchants whose object in life was to acquire wealth in excess of the requirements of their livelihood, were held in contempt. Even to-day, water touched by such is deemed to be impure.

A school of thought has arisen in Europe which looks upon property as inherently vicious, and would advise its forcible extirpation. For, there, the irresponsible ownership of property is a potent factor in maintaining the antagonism between the claims of universal humanity and of individual man. And, so far, Western Politics has devoted its forces to the protection of the rights of the proprietor. Hence the need for this counter-movement.

But many substances which are now good food, were once unpalatable or even poisonous. Man, however, did not reject these at the outset, but made them wholesome and toothsome by a long process of culture. India, likewise, cultivated the viciousness out of property by converting the household into a field for spiritual discipline. And thus society in India stably maintained itself for centuries on the basis of the individual ownership of property; in fact India's wealth of food and clothing, education, morals and religion were all so acquired,—by virtue of that original precautionary measure.

When the welfare of society is left to depend on the voluntary generosity of its wealthy members, then is the vicious aspect of property brought out; for the indiscriminate acceptance of charity spoils the recipient. But, in India, expenditure by the householder for social welfare was not a matter of generosity, but of primary

duty in the interests of his own fulfilment. Such duty was cast not only on the rich, but also on the poor, according to their means. Manu says : "The *rishis,* the forefathers, the gods, the guests, and all living creatures, expect to be maintained by the householder. Knowing this, he should act accordingly." By many such injunctions and in diverse other ways, are the Indian people kept reminded that the *dharma* of the householder consists in fulfilling the various claims of humanity. And further, in Manu's opinion, those who are of weak character and have no control over their passions,—they are not worthy of the householders' high estate.

In order to understand the principle underlying Hindu marriage, it is necessary first to come to a true appreciation of this principle underlying the Hindu social system. It will then become clear that, in this type of society, having for its object the perfection of communal life, there is danger in allowing marriage to pursue the path of self-will. Such a society can only withstand the encroachments of Nature, if its marriage system is walled round with a protective embankment. So the Hindu ideal of marriage has no regard for individual taste or inclination,—it is, rather, afraid of them.

If any European would really understand the psychology behind this, let him bethink himself of the state of things that obtained during the last war. Ordinarily, in Europe, there is no bar to international marriages. But, when the one objective of the war overshadowed all other considerations, marriage with the subject of an enemy country became an impossibility; so much so, that European society felt no compunction in cruelly severing even long-standing marriage ties of this description. Not only was the marriage question so affected, but during war conditions, food and all other amenities of life had to be cut down to a uniform standard. The personal liberty and elasticity of occupation, so characteristic of Western civilisation, tended wholly to disappear.

These war conditions afford a good parallel to the permanent conditions which govern Hindu society, where the encroachment of alien cultures has always been a constant danger to be guarded against. This vital objective of the twice-born leaders, who

practically represented the whole people, therefore runs as a steady undercurrent through our society. The problem of keeping its civilisation pure having been acknowledged as all-important, and its solution thus sought by India, her society has had to claim of its members the severe and permanent curbing of their individual liberty of choice and action.

Indian society, however, did not reach this stage all at once. It was gradually evolved through successive adaptations to changing circumstances. Meanwhile many relics of earlier stages survived into the later. Therefore Manu had to recognise, in his treatise, different other forms of marriage, such as the *Gándharva* (by mutual choice), *Rákshasa* (by conquest), *Asur* (by purchase), *Paishácha* (by taking advantage of helplessness). In none of these is the social will manifest, but only the desire of the individual; for force whether of arms, or money, or circumstances, is arrogant and passion refuses to submit to extraneous considerations. But, while recording these forms, Manu censured them.

Though the Gándharva marriage, founded on mutual attraction, was also one of those which did not find favour with the Lawgiver, it nevertheless long persisted in Indian society, as our epics and other literature make clear. This only shows that, however conservatively stable a society may be, the principle of stability cannot be equally strong amongst all the classes which it comprises. In the Kshatriya character, especially, the cultivation of self-suppression was least likely to attain its fullest development. It is not possible to keep confined in a complex net of social obligations the warrior spirit which ever seeks fresh fields for expansion. It is for this reason that our *shástras* prohibited the crossing of the sea. Any adventurous activity whatsoever, that may loosen our mind from its mooring and disturb the fixed habit of our thought and belief and behaviour, is bound to undermine the very foundation of our society.

Not only sea voyage, but also residence in foreign countries with antagonistic social ideals, was prohibited and penalised. In the West we find now-a-days all kinds of forcible attempts being made to prevent the intrusion of Bolshevic ideas. This is comparable with our prohibition of foreign travel. No penalty is

deemed too severe if it but keep in check the propaganda which, it is apprehended, may destroy the elements essential for the stability of the orthodox Western social system. The liberty of the people to form their own opinions, to regulate their own conduct, is here no longer respected. The terrorist organisation called Fascism, which seems to be daily gaining ground in Europe, is the exact counterpart of our rigorous social injunctions. There was a day in India when for the Sudra to aspire to the path of the Brahmin entailed the death penalty. The same psychological phenomenon is seen in the West in the cruel forms of Lynching, Fascism, Ku-Klux-Klanism, and the like.

It is no doubt conducive to a certain strength if all the members of a society are, in the main, moulded in accordance with some uniform standard. That may be a bar to the fullest development of its individuals, but it certainly does help to keep the society, as a whole, in a state of stable equilibrium. And, if any society, on the cessation of its growth, should come to pride itself on being, not like a growing tree, but like a temple of which its securely established immoveableness is its glory, it will inevitably feel the moving of a single one of its bricks to be a loss. Nevertheless it is not possible to keep all the members of any society uniformly bound in such unalterable fixity—that is against the nature of man and destructive of the principle of life itself. So that, so long as any people is vigorously alive, they or some of them cannot but keep breaking through the rules and prohibitions imposed by their society. Both in its biological and sociological phases, these opposing forces of conservation and experimentation, are characteristic of Life.

Anyhow, so long as the Kshatriyas were real Kshatriyas, it was not found possible to keep them rigorously bound down to the habitual performance of the prescribed rules for daily observance. That is why, in the history of ancient India, at the bottom of all the social and religious revolutions, were the Kshatriyas. We must remember that Buddha was a Kshatriya, that Mahávîra was a Kshatriya; and that the clan, to which Srîkrishna himself belonged, was not famous for observing the precepts and prohibitions most esteemed by the Lawgivers. If we read through the Mahábhárata, we are reminded at every turn

that, however determined may have been the endeavour to protect society behind a permanent embankment, there was not a single kingly clan of note which did not break through the walls. It was only in comparatively recent times, when the Kshatriyas had lost their virility and the Brahmins had gained almost unquestioned ascendancy, that it became possible to make the social bonds so rigorously inert.

Manu gives the name of *Gándharva* to marriage by mutual choice, and signifies his disapprobation by stigmatising it as "born of desire." The way to marriage, which is shown by the torchlight of passion, has not for its goal the welfare of society, but the satisfaction of desire. Even in Europe, where the obligation of the individual to society is much lighter, it is well known how the mingling of the sexes under the impulse of passion often gives rise to anti-social difficulties; but there, society being mobile, the effects are not so deep as with us. In our *shástras,* therefore, the *Bráhma* marriage is considered to be the best. According to this, the bride should be given to a man who had not solicited her. If the institution of marriage has to be regulated strictly from the social standpoint, room cannot be found for the personal wishes of the people concerned. So, the system which obtains in the case of the Royal Houses of Europe, is the system which prevails throughout Hindu society.

Another way for the better understanding by the European of the mentality underlying our marriage system, would be by reference to the discussions on eugenics, which are a feature of modern Europe. The science of Eugenics, like all other sciences, attaches but little weight to personal sentiment. According to it, selection by personal inclination must be rigorously regulated for the sake of the progeny. If the principle involved be once admitted, marriage needs must be rescued from the control of the heart, and brought under the province of the intellect, otherwise insoluble problems will keep on arising; for passion recks not consequences, nor brooks interference by outside judges.

To return to our Kshatriyas, they were, as I have indicated, not in the habit of observing with any strictness the social rules relating to marriage. But it becomes clear from the poems of

Kalidas, that there was a struggle of protest in his mind against this laxity of their observance. The Poet keenly felt the value of the eugenic restrictions which were directed towards maintaining the racial ideals pure, and yet his heart could not fail to be moved by the beauty of the play of the natural loves of man and woman against the background of the exuberance of the Universal Life. In most of the great works of Kalidas are treated the conflict of these opposities. The coming of the line of the Bháratas was a great event in the History of India. But though the prelude of unbridled desire, which ushered in the founder of the line, has been viewed by the Poet in its aspect of Beauty in the first part of the play, he has corrected it from the standpoint of the Good towards the conclusion.

Amidst the natural beauty of the forest hermitage, Sakuntalá's youth blossoms out in prodigal curves of body and mind, along with the exstacy of form and movement in the flowering trees and creepers around her. Everywhere in this retreat does Nature beckon, but Society, as yet, has found no loophole through which to obtrude the warning of her uplifted finger. Sakuntalá's secret union with King Dushyanta, which takes place amidst these surroundings, is not in harmony with the rest of society. So, according to the Poet, the curse comes upon her. She overlooks, in her self-absorption, the duty of hospitality; for when Nature is busy securing any special purpose, she throws all other purposes into the background. Society thereupon exacts its penalty and, in the Kings' audience hall, the inevitable thunderbolt of insult and rejection falls upon Sakuntalá.

In the seventh Act, the picture which the Poet draws of the hermitage, in which is consummated King Dushyanta's final union with Sakuntalá, now purified by discipline, is everywhere full of the rigour of renunciation, eclipsing the life-play of Nature. In the opening scene, the King is informed that the *Rishi* is busy expounding the *dharma* of the wifely estate. Sakuntalá, here, is seen as the emblem of devotion, the Mother. It is clear that the Poet's object was vividly to contrast these two pictures of the relations of woman to man, the one carrying the bondage of desire, the other the detachment of *dharma*.

Motherhood, in so far as it is concerned with the physical nurture of offspring, is not essentially different in man and the lower animals, being a function of biological, not of sociological life, governed by instincts which are of nature, not by man's own creative power. But where the mother undergoes voluntary penance for the elevation of the human race, keeping her natural instincts in rigorous subordination to the dictates of mind and soul, there indeed is her own creative power at work. Now-a-days in the West, we often find women feeling a certain degradation in becoming subject to Maternity; that is to say, they feel the insult of having to submit to this tyranny of Nature over their sex. But the way for woman to avoid such insult is not by abjuring Motherhood, but by making it subserve her ideal, by bringing it under the control of her own intellect and conscience. How far India's conscious activity in the past—this striving of hers for the best possible progeny—was fully consonant with the conclusions of modern science, is not the question here. The point is, that just by such intellectual and spiritual vigilance can the human Mother achieve her true dignity.

In his Kumára-sambhava it is the same thing that the Poet tells us. There he has shown the divine aspect of the eternal love of man and woman. When the Titans have won paradise, and banished the gods therefrom, the love of man and woman, transformed into ascetic striving, wins back heaven from the insult of defeat. The gods are eternally awaiting the birth of Kumára, the conqueror of evil. And, in order to achieve this birth, the passion of desire must be transmuted into pure, disciplined endeavour. The rigorous aspect of such achievement is the truth which is beauty. The beauty of Illusion is gorgeous in its adornment, the beauty of Freedom is naked.

In all the three of his works, the Raghu-vamsa, the Kumára-sambhava and Sakuntalá, India's Poet has looked upon marriage as a state of discipline, not intended for gaining individual happiness but of which the method is the control of desire and the object to bring about the birth of the Slayer of Evil, the super-man who will make possible the achievement of heaven on earth. The agony of the Poet which we glimpse in each of these, springs from his consciousness of the degeneracy

which was overtaking society through the flagrant disregard by the Kshatriya kings of the Aryan ideal of marriage. And the Poet sends out his call to bring away the union of man and woman from the realm of Kandarpa (*Eros*) into the hermitage of Shiva, the Good. This Indian ideal of marriage can be much more vividly understood from the works of the Poet than from any Dharma-shástra.

Here the question arises that, if desire be banished from the very threshold of marriage, how can love find any place in the wedded life? Those who have no true acquaintance with our country, and whose marriage system is entirely different, take it for granted that the Hindu marriage is loveless. But do we not know of our own knowledge how false is such conclusion?

If we accept the institution of marriage, we must also admit that no system can be devised to ensure that its original object shall remain true throughout the long period covered by the life of the wedded couple. That is why, both law and public opinion have to keep such vigilant watch from the outside. But when external compulsion tries to bind together those whom only mutual love can truly unite, it makes their relations inherently impure,—in fact, no greater insult can be offered to man. Yet, all over the civilised world, man submits even to this for the sake of the welfare of his children. So far, no society has been able to claim that it has arrived at a faultless solution of the difficulty. In entering the married state we have all to make our plunge into the doubtful and leave it to providence whether we shall sink, or swim through.

The "desire," however, against which India's solution of the marriage problem declared war, is one of Nature's most powerful fighters; consequently, the question of how to overcome it was not an easy one. There is a particular age, said India, at which this attraction between the sexes reaches its height, so if marriage is to be regulated according to the social will, it must be finished with before such age. Hence the Indian custom of early marriage.

This brings to my mind the conversation I once had with an Agriculturist. I was complaining to him of the lack of common grazing grounds in our villages, whereupon he told me

that it was a mistake to suppose that a cow would thrive best if allowed to graze at will. Scientific feeding with specially cultivated fodder-crops could only yield the best results. These must have been the lines of argument, in regard to married love, pursued in our country. For the purpose of marriage, spontaneous love is unreliable, its proper cultivation should yield the best results,—such was the conclusion,—and this cultivation should begin before marriage. Therefore from their earliest years, the husband as an idea, is held up before our girls, in verse and story, through ceremonial and worship. When at length they get this "husband", he is to them not a person but a principle, like Loyalty, Patriotism, or such other abstractions which owe their immense strength to the fact that the best part of them is our own creation and therefore part of our inner being.

There is also in our society the glorification of the *Satî*, the ideal wife; and, accordingly, a real reverence for woman, as the embodiment of housewifely virtues, is not rare in our country. The idea was, in both cases, to replace the natural passion of sexual love by the cultivated emotion of wedded love. But, it must be admitted that woman being emotional by nature, it has not been as easy for man thus to idealise the married state as it has been for her. It must also be admitted that the restraints and restrictions prescribed in the case of the man have not been so rigorous as those for the woman.

Therefore, in coming to our judgement on the marriage system of India, we must not fail to recognise the fact that therein the man and the woman are not on a footing of equality. Such inequality would have utterly humiliated her, but that, for the wife, the husband is an idea. She has not surrendered herself to the brute force of another, but voluntarily consecrated herself to the service of her own ideal. And if the husband is a man of sensitive soul the flame of this ideal love is transmitted to his own life also. Such mutual illumination it has often been our lot to witness.

There is yet another vital element in India's culture which we must keep in mind. In spite of her exaltation of the household estate, India did not look upon this as man's ultimate stage. According to India's ideal, even the home must be given up in

due course, in quest of the Infinite,—the household, in fact, is only to be set up as an important stage in this quest. Even to-day, we see our householders, when their children are grown up, leaving their home to spend the rest of their life in some place of pilgrimage. Here is another pair of opposities which India attempted to reconcile. On the one hand, her civilisation is essentially bound up in the home, albeit a home in which a wide circle of relationships find their place. On the other, its endeavour is, one by one, to snap all earthly ties in its pursuit of the liberation of the soul. In fact, it recognises the social bonds because it is only through their acceptance that they can be transcended. In order to get rid of the natural desires of man, they must be used up; that is to say, guided by the spirit of renunciation to their own extinction. Here we find the difference between Hinduism and Buddhism. In its relations with Nature, Buddhism is uncompromisingly anarchist from the very outset.

The weakness of the Hindu system lies in the fact that its complex web is too closely knit, and that the least loosening of its fibre, in any of its parts, tends to its disruption. It is afraid of the contact of the outside because the bond which holds it together is that of external regulation, whose strength depends upon habitual conformity. But self-segregation for any society is no longer practicable in this age. For, while it may be possible to prevent the man on this side of the sea from crossing to the other, what about preventing those on the other side from coming over here?

So have alien ideas, alien systems, alien customs, breaking in through her embankments, dashed upon India in a multitudinous flood, making visible breaches in all the habits and beliefs which were the pillars of her social system. Further, apart from this disturbance of her inward life, there has been the more effective attack of an alien economic system; for, without a sufficiency of food, it is impossible for the various relationships of her complex society to be kept together. And, just as foreign ideas come pouring in on our mental world, so do our foodstuffs, caught up in various currents of commerce, keep flowing away towards foreign lands. So that the people of our

country, in their social dealings, are now compelled to keep careful count of their meagre resources. Lastly, there is the nemesis of the unrealised ideal, which overtakes any civilisation when, by reason of flagging vitality, it fails in the earnestness of its pursuit, and lapses into the stagnation of mechanical habits. Every living organism is constantly confronted with the waste products of its own fatigue, for which its vital forces, while active, find natural means of elimination. The adoption of complex external devices is of no avail when vitality is on the wane, for they only tend to weaken the natural functions still further, if not to create new forms of weakness and disease. The civilisations which flourished for a time, and have disappeared, are those which committed suicide, clinging on to their own toxic products, by suppressing, under the urgence of their special purposes, the cleansing impulses provided by Nature.

Anyhow, the special qualities of head and heart, which once found varied support in our broad social system, are now dying out for lack of opportunity for their exercise; meanwhile it has not been possible to effect a corresponding change in the structure of our society; with the result, that while all its restrictions keep on hampering us, their original object and justification have become impossible of acknowledgement. And so, on every side, are the members of this vast society overwhelmed with futility. In particular, the very basis of our marriage system having been undermined, there is no longer any harmony of adjustment between the underlying ideals and the actual facts of our modern marriages. One section of our people keeps crying out for a return of the *Satya-yuga,* but that golden age refuses to respond to their call. The time has, therefore, come for us to think out our problems afresh, to correlate our thoughts and conclusions with those of all humanity.

The gulf of separation, which Nature has contrived between the sexes, has preserved in its atmosphere the varied play of a powerful mutual attraction. This force which is creative,—but destructive as well,—continually sends its awakening message to our souls from behind the veil. If we screen off society from its forceful activity, that may conduce to its own safety, but will surely reduce it to passivity. In our language we call the

power of woman over man by the name of *shakti*. Deprived of *shakti* the creative process in society languishes, and man, losing his vitality, becomes mechanical in his habits. In such case, though he may still retain many a passive quality, all energy of activity forsakes him. The manner in which the relations between the sexes have been regulated in our country, has left no room for the action of this *shakti;* for, as we have seen, our society, with immoveable stability as its objective, has been busy cultivating the passive qualities, ever in dread of individual forcefulness. Now that our country has awakened to outside influences, she finds herself powerless to resist alien aggression. She has even lost the faculty of recognising that her weakness proceeds from within her own social system, and is not the outcome of any outward accident.

In every society, its civilisation is the territory conquered in its contest with Nature. And since in our country this contest was long and bitter, everywhere we find its fences more in evidence than its roads. But because there was once a good reason for this state of things, it does not help to save her when the reason has ceased to exist. Her barriers which kept the outsider off, now keep herself confined.

It seems that in the age which has now come upon us, man is thinking of giving up the desperate hope of victoriously keeping up this constant struggle. He would now make his peace with Nature,—and that duty has been entrusted to Science. But the marriage system of every society belongs to an age when, in the Parliament of Life, man was sitting on the opposition benches against Nature's government. And Nature has ever retaliated against his obstructive tactics. Up to now they have nowhere come to any satisfactory agreement. That is why these ubiquitous attempts at the external regulation of man's most intimate relations, have been insulting his best feelings and degrading the greatest of his institutions, all over the world.

Let me, as an individual Indian, offer in conclusion my own personal contribution to the discussion of the marriage question generally.

There are two parallel activities in the human world, the

one which carries forward the stream of population : the other, the civilisation of man. The first chiefly belongs to the realm of Life, and the second to that of Mind. In the creation of progeny, man's part though essential, is secondary. After he has once roused the passive seed, in woman's keeping, to vital activity, all the travail of child-bearing and parturition are hers alone. It is because of this comparative lightness of the male function in the propagation of the species, that we find instances of the killing off of superfluous males in the insect world, and of the keeping down of the number of male beasts by internecine struggles due to the savage jealousy which is their characteristic; shewing the minor importance of this sex for the purpose of biological creation.

But, when Mind evolved itself into greatness, man found the opportunity to gain glory for his sex in the scheme of human development. For, while woman remained entangled in the specific duties which Life had assigned to her, man, with his greater freedom therefrom, was able to respond to the call of his intellect and engage in various work of creation in the world of Mind,—in fact he created the sphere of his own usefulness. In this, the first chapter of civilisation, when Mind was in the ascendant, woman in her turn dropped into the second place, not only as less useful, but even as an actual impediment; for the world which was her special creation, constantly sought to throw its toils round the adventurous spirit of man as well. This comparative unimportance of woman in the birth stage of civilisation, clings to her still. That is why the rebellious section of womankind would curtail her responsibilities in the region of Life, in order to enable her to claim equality with man in the work of his creation of society.

Opportunities, however, cannot be artificially created. The propensities of heart, strongly ingrained in woman's nature, cannot be dislodged by attacks from the outside. The tendency of these propensities of hers are towards holding fast, and not progressing onwards. So it is only by adherence to the cult of preservation that woman can attain her true welfare. If she desparately engages in adventurous pursuits, she will at every step come into conflict with her own inner nature, and thus

constantly distracted, she can never succeed in competing with man in his own special sphere. But just as man, after a long period of subordination during the ascendancy of Life, was enabled to get rid of his disabilities in a subsequent stage, so woman too may look forward to a yet higher regime whereunder she will have the right to emerge from her present subjection. It is difficult to decide what to call this next stage; for the word "*spiritual*" is so beset with controversy regarding its true meaning. However, let me for my present purpose give it that name.

The inner qualities of the woman's heart, result in an important by-product, which may be called *charm*. This charm, like light, is a force. Intangible, imponderable though it be, the strivings of our intellect may not attain fruition if deprived of its life-giving touch. The nourishment which the tree draws though its roots may be classified and measured,—not so the vitality which is the gift of the sunlight, and without which its functioning becomes altogether impossible.

This ineffable emanation of woman's nature has, from the first, played its part in the creations of man, unobtrusively but inevitably. Had man's mind not been energised by the inner working of woman's vital charm, he would never have attained his successes. Of all the higher achievements of civilisation,—the devotion of the toiler, the valour of the brave, the creations of the artist,—the secret spring is to be found in woman's influence. In the clash and battle of primitive civilisation, the action of woman's *shakti* is not clearly manifest; but, as civilisation becomes spiritual in the course of its development, and the union of man with man is acknowledged to be more important than the differences between them, the charm of woman gets the opportunity to become the predominant factor. Such spiritual civilisation can only be upheld if the emotion of woman and the intellect of man are contributed in usual shares for its purposes. Then their respective contributions may combine gloriously in ever-fresh creations, and their difference will no longer make for inequality.

Woman, let me repeat, has two aspects,—in one she is the Mother; in the other, the Beloved. I have already spoken of the spiritual endeavour that characterises the first, *viz.*, the

striving, not merely for giving birth to her child, but for creating the best possible child,—not as an addition to the number of men, but as one of the heroic souls who may win victory in man's eternal fight against evil in his social life and natural surroundings. As the Beloved, it is woman's part to infuse life into all the aspirations of man; and the spiritual power that enables her to do so I have called *charm*, and was known in India by the name of *shakti*.

There is a poem called *Ananda-laharî* (The stream of Delight), attributed to Shankarácharya. She who is glorified therein is the *Shakti* in the heart of the Universe, the Giver of Joy, the Inspirer of Activity. On the one hand, we know and use the world; on the other we are related to it by ties of disinterested joy. We can know the world because it is a manifestation of Truth: we rejoice in it because it is an expression of Joy. "Who would have striven for life," says the *Rishi*, "if this *ánanda* (joy) had not filled the sky." It seems to me that the "Intellectual Beauty", whose praises Shelley has sung, is identical with this *Ananda*. And it is this same *ánanda* which the poet of *Ananda-laharî* has visualised as the woman; that is to say, in his view, this Universal *Shakti* is manifest in human Society in the nature of Woman. In this manifestation is her charm. Let no one confuse this *shakti* with mere "sweetness", for in this charm there is a combination of several qualities,—patience, self-abnegation, sensitive intelligence, grace in thought, word and behaviour,—the reticent expression of rhythmic life, the tenderness and terribleness of love; at its core, moreover, is that self-radiant Spirit of Delight which ever gives itself up.

This *shakti*, this joy-giving power of woman as the Beloved, has up to now largely been dissipated by the greed of man, who has sought to use it for the purposes of his individual enjoyment, corrupting it, confining it, like his property, within jealously-guarded limits. That has also obstructed for woman herself her inward realisation of the full glory of her own *shakti*. Her personality has been insulted at every turn by being made to display its power of delectation within a circumscribed arena. It is because she has not found her true place in the great world,

that she sometimes tries to capture man's special estate as a desperate means of coming into her own. But it is not by coming out of her home that woman can gain her liberty. Her liberation can only be effected in a society where her true *shakti,* her *ánanda,* is given the widest and highest scope for its activity. Man has already achieved the means of self-expansion in public activity without giving up his individual concerns. When, likewise, any society shall be able to offer a larger field for the creative work of woman's special faculty, without detracting from her creative work in the home, then in such society will the true union of man and woman become possible.

The marriage system all over the world, from the earliest ages till now, is a barrier in the way of such true union. That is why woman's *shakti,* in all existing societies, is so shamefully wasted and corrupted. That is why, in every country marriage is still more or less of a prison house for the confinement of woman,—with all its guards wearing the badge of the dominant male. That is why man, by dint of his efforts to bind woman, has made her the strongest of fetters for his own bondage. That is why woman is debarred from adding to the spiritual wealth of society by the perfection of her own nature, and all human societies are weighed down with the burden of the resulting poverty.

The civilisation of man has not, up to now, loyally recognised the reign of the Spirit. Therefore the married state is still one of the most fruitful sources of the unhappiness and downfall of man, of his disgrace and humiliation. But those who believe that society is a manifestation of the spirit, will assuredly not rest in their endeavours till they have rescued human marriage relations from outrage by the brute forces of society,—till they have thereby given free play to the force of Love in all the concerns of humanity.

THE OLDER ELEMENTS IN INDO-ARYAN RELIGION

By Dr. Sten Konow.

When the Aryans came to India, they brought with them a double inheritance. They had spent a considerable time together with their Iranian brothers, who also called themselves Aryans, and the two tribes had developed a common civilisation, which had left its traces in their religious conceptions. And these prehistoric Aryans were, in their turn, the descendants of older tribes, whom we may call Indo-European, with their own ancient religious ideas and rites.

In order to understand the development of religious thought in Aryan India we must accordingly first try to find out what was inherited from the Aryan and from the Indo-European periods, because this inheritance was the fundament on which their religion was built up.

Formerly it was usual to see in the Rigveda a picture of Indo-European religion, because some of the usual terms could be traced in the religious literature of other ancient Indo-European peoples as well. The word *deva,* god, is identical with Latin *deus*, and it is also traceable in Old-Norwegian *tivar. Dyaus pitar*, the Sky Father, is the Greek *Zeus pater,* the Latin *Juppiter,* and *Dyaus* is also found in the Germanic tradition, which speaks of *Tyr,* German *Ziu,* who is there the god of war. *Ushas,* the dawn, is the Greek *eos,* the Latin *aurora; surya*, the sun, the Greek *helios; agni,* fire, the Latin *ignis,* etc.

It was believed that we can trace a rich Indo-European mythology, and from the etymological meaning of the word *deva,* god, *lit.* shining, and the character of the individual gods, the conclusion was drawn that the Indo-European ancestors worshipped light and celestial bodies and the phenomena of nature, and that they had a notion of a supreme God, the Sky Father, who was sometimes compared with the Christian God, the good and merciful father of man.

We now know that the picture was wrongly drawn. It is true that the Indo-Europeans spoke of *devas,* gods connected with light and the sky, but they also seem to have had other designations for their gods. Such ancient tales and traditions as seem to go back into Indo-European times, are chiefly tales about marvellous deeds, and not about individual gods. For the names of the heroes of such tales differ from people to people.

We get the impression that individual gods had hardly been developed. In India it is Indra who wields the thunderbolt, while in Greece Zeus, and in Rome Juppiter does so; and the Germanic tribes speak of a god Thunderer. From this we would naturally draw the inference that the fundamental idea was the belief in a mystic force manifested in thundering, and behind this force they saw a vague personality, because they were accustomed to find a personal agent behind the powerful act. Later on the wielding of the thunderbolt was ascribed to such gods as were considered to be pre-eminently fitted for it, to Indra in India and to Zeus in Greece. But this seems to be a secondary development.

The name which has played the greatest rôle in the speculations of the old mythological school, is *Dyaus pitar.* A critical analysis of the material has shown that we do not, in reality, know anything about the conceptions covered by this name. We only know the name itself. In the Rigveda, however, the Sky Father is commonly mentioned together with *Prthivi matar,* the Earth Mother, and if this combination could be proved to have been inherited from the Indo-European period, we might perhaps draw some further inferences.

I think that such in reality is the case. Tacitus tells us about certain Germanic tribes who worshipped *Nerthus,* the Earth Mother, and traces of a similar worship are found with other Indo-European peoples. I even think it probable that the observances described in Tacitus' account of the *Nerthus*-worship are genetically related to similar ceremonies in connection with the Indian Durgá-pûja, in other words that we have in India and in the Germanic north two different branches of one ancient tree: an Indo-European worship of the Earth Mother with a

complicated ritual, aiming at increasing and instigating the fertility of the earth and the generative power generally, wherewith we seem to be able to trace a male deity in addition to the goddess.

There is another Indian conception which may help us to understand the matter still better. In addition to *Dyaus pitar* we have a *Mánush pitar,* the Man Father, the ancestor of the human race or rather of the Aryans. If we compare the two terms, it will be seen that the second word must be the most important one, just as in the designation *Prthivi matar.* What is meant is not the Sky or Man as father, but the Father, *i.e.* the idea of fatherhood or active generation, as manifested in Sky and Man respectively.

And, so far as I can see, we here have before us the fundamental notion in Indo-European religiosity. The gods were not personifications of light, or of the phenomenon of nature, but the worship was directed towards primeval forces and potencies, behind which more or less vague personalities were seen. Such forces might be met with in the sun, in fire, in water and in other natural objects, but also elsewhere, in all the multifarious vicissitudes of life. Everywhere man had to reckon with such forces, everywhere he might be confronted with uncontrollable mystic power.

It is customary to speak of the limited horizon of primitive races like the ancient Indo-Europeans. And we are, in a certain sense, quite justified in doing so. On the other hand we may also say that they lived in a much larger world than we do. Not only did human beings, animals, trees, and so forth, have their life, but such was also the case with what we call lifeless objects, and further with all sorts of ideas and notions, which we are accustomed to consider as abstract conceptions, such as force, strength, thought, fulness, destruction. It is the so-called pre-animistic or pan-vitalistic mentality with which we are everywhere met, and which is conspicuous in the Indo-European element in Indo-Aryan religion. And, as we shall see, it has never become quite overgrown.

The next stage of development in the history of the Indo-Aryan religions was reached in the so-called Aryan period, when

the Indian and Iranian Aryans had not yet split up into two branches. We have no direct sources from which to study the social and religious physiognomy of the period. Such information as can be gathered, is derived from a comparison of the most ancient Indian and Iranian sources, the Rigveda and the Avesta.

The first thing which strikes us is, that we find a new designation of the gods, in addition to the old *deva, viz. asura*, or, as the word sounds in Iranian, *ahura*.

Two such *Asuras* can, with almost absolute certainty, be assigned to the Iranian period. In the Rigveda we hear about the mighty *asuras*, Mitra and Varuna, and their names are often brought together in a *dvandva*-compound, which shows that they were thought to be intimately connected with each other. In the Avesta we find a similar couple, Ahura and Mithra, whose names are likewise compounded in *dvandva*, and there can hardly be any doubt that the whole conception is common Aryan. The name Varuna seems, however, to have been coined on Indian soil.

In later Iranian sources Mithra appears as a personification of the sun, and he is usually considered as an old sun-god. Also the Vedic Mitra is frequently mentioned in connection with the day and with light, while Varuna seems to be more frequently brought into connection with the night. He has therefore often been identified with the moon, as an old moon-god, while other scholars have compared his name with Greek Ouranos, heaven, and explained him as a personification of heaven, more especially the vaulted night-heaven.

Such explanations are quite in agreement with the current conception of Indian and Indo-European religion as a worship of light and the celestial bodies. But they are nothing more than guesses. And there are several considerations which can be urged against them.

In the first place we do not always find Mitra brought into connection with day, and Varuna, or his Iranian counterpart Ahura, with night. In the Iranian language of Ancient Khotan, Urmayzde *i.e.* Ahura Mazdah, the later development of the ancient Iranian Ahura, has become the name of the sun. Further the sun is often in the Vedas described as Mitra's or

Varuna's eye, and such would scarcely have been the case if one of these gods were considered to be identical with the sun. At all events, it would be very difficult to understand how the sun could be called Varuna's eye if Varuna were the moon.

Further, an analysis of the features mentioned in connection with the two great Asuras, especially in the Rigveda, seems to lead us away from sun and moon, and in quite a different direction.

There is one important word which very frequently occurs in connection with these gods,—the Sanskrit *rita,* old-Iranian *asha,* or probably more correctly *urta.* We do not know the etymology of this word. In Iranian it seems to mean *purity,* righteousness, and is invoked almost as a deity. In the Vedas, *rita* means *truth,*—that which really is and not only appears to be,—the eternal reality.

It is now of importance to note that the Iranian *Mithra* and *Ahura* are described as friends of *asha,* while the Vedic *Mitra* and *Varuna* are the guardians of *rita,—ritasya gopau.* The connection of the two gods with *rita* must therefore be old, dating back to the Aryan period, before the Indian and Iranian Aryans had separated.

Truthfulness, purity and law were accordingly ideas which played a great rôle in the ancient Aryan society, and, in accordance with the ancient Indo-European way of thinking, they were something more than ideas. They were independent entities, eternal forces.

Now we can see that there was especially one point where Mitra's and Varuna's influence, their power, was felt and became manifest : in all such cases where man and man, family and family met and concluded pacts and treaties, entered into solemn engagements with each other.

The German professor Lüders has shown that there were, even in the Aryan period, fixed formulas defining the evil consequences of various degrees of violating a solemn contract. It is evident that a mystic power was thought to be found behind the agreement, which could not be violated without evil consequences.

Now the French scholar Meillet has drawn attention to the

fact that the Iranian word Mithra actually means *contract, pact,* just as the Indian Mitra means *friend, friendship,* which is also a mutual engagement, a solemn pact. M. Meillet also deals with Varuna and shows that his name is derived from a base from which we find several derivatives in the Indo-European languages meaning *solemn engagement, oath, etc.* And there cannot be much doubt that Varuna is, in his origin, the occult potency in the solemn announcement of agreement to some pact, in the binding declaration of truth,—the oath or curse, a mystic and inevitable power, conceived in the shape of a person who watched over the sacrosanctity of such declarations.

In the contract and in the solemn and truthful declaration man approaches *rita*, eternal truth, itself. And *rita* is like the *mana* of the Polynesians, an irresistible power, which one can only approach with care and precaution. Mitra and Varuna are, in a certain sense, emanations of eternal *rita*. But they are both conceived in personal shape and, as we have seen, as the guardians of *rita,* who punish every assault on it. Varuna, more especially, lays the transgressor in fetters, or strikes him with dropsy.

It is evident that Mitra and Varuna had come to be considered in the likeness of powerful rulers, that their picture had been drawn under the influence of the conditions prevailing in the Aryan state. And that such is actually the case is evident from everything which we hear about them. They are described as kings, *rájan*, or as paramount rulers, *samráj*. As such they are not, however, the leaders in war and battle, but the guardians of justice and law. It is evident that the Aryan state was not chiefly an organisation for the sake of warfare, but rather intended to be a safeguard for the interests of peaceful cultivators and traders. The institution of a paramount king, an overlord over petty *rájans* points to the existence of a state of some extent, and with a somewhat advanced organisation.

Mitra and Varuna are, as we saw, above all *ritasya gopau,* who punish the evil-doer. There are hymns in the Rigveda where the poet is tormented by the consciousness of having broken the law of *rita,* and they have been compared with the Jewish psalms as sublime expressions of heartfelt repentance of

sin. And there can be no doubt that there is, in some songs of Vasishtha, a personal ring of pain, because his sin has separated him from his friend, the powerful god. A closer analysis, however, shows that the prevailing feeling is not one of repentance and longing, but rather of fear and trembling, as one would experience them after having violated the injunctions of a king.

We therefore have before us a reflect of the state of things in the Aryan state, and not an originally religious conception.

The same is the case when we hear of the *páshas,* the fetters and cords of Varuna, the prototype of the fetters and chains with which the ordinary criminal was bound. And even the spies of Varuna and Mitra are no more than the spies which the Aryan king used in order to get informed about everything that happened in his country. We know the whole system well enough from the Kautilya and the Mudrá-ráksasa, and we learn from the Rigveda that it has its roots in the pre-Indian period of Aryan history.

When once the idea had become familiar that the great gods had their spies, it was natural enough that the Aryans should see the eyes of these spies in the stars, and especially in the sun, and we often hear about the latter as Mitra's or Varuna's eye, just as the spies of a human king are called his eyes. That is not however, the origin of the whole conception, but merely a natural consequence of the great gods being seen in the likeness of powerful kings.

There is an old Indian saying, which has been handed down both in Sanskrit and in Pali: *yadannah purusho bhavanti tadannás tasya devatáh*: what man eats, that also his deities eat. In other words, the human conceptions of the gods are framed after the pattern of our life on earth. This is a point of view which is exactly the opposite of what the ancient Hebrews held when they said that God created man in his own likeness. And in my opinion the Indian saying is much deeper than the Biblic sentence.

We do not know anything for certain about a personal God or a first creation. We only know the phenomenal world as it appears to us and apparently exists and has existed since time immemorial. But we know that the human mind does not only

grasp outward things and beings, but also so-called abstract ideas and notions. And in both cases we have only one proof of the existence of what we perceive : the fact that we perceive it. In Indian as in European Logic, the most conclusive proof of existence is *pratyaksha,* direct perception by means of the senses. Whether we are materialist or idealist the inner sensation remains a certain fact, which we cannot doubt. Now every fundamental religious notion is the result of an inner sensation, and from the fact that such notions are found with all human beings, we can infer that they form a necessary constituent of human nature. There they are, and we cannot tell how they have originated. They must have been there before they were perceived.

But now we know that every picture of a thing is liable to be more or less perfect. Not every camera produces photographs of exactly the same quality. Much depends on the light, and much depends on the apparatus. So, if we accept the view that religious ideas have their own existence and are reflected in the human mind, we must necessarily infer that different minds reflect them in different ways. When life is full of struggle for material aims, when man has not learned how to cope with the outward nature, his religious conceptions will be coloured by the experience of his daily life and get a grossly material stamp. As civilization increases and it is found that it is possible, by exertion and intelligence, to surmount the difficulties, the notion of force will be spiritualised and heightened.

And thus man naturally conceives his gods in accordance with the conditions of his life. At a primitive stage he thinks of them as possessed of physical strength, as powerful and even as crafty. In a civilised state, where law and order prevails under the protection of kings of recognised authority, the character of the gods necessarily changes. They become the personifications of law and justice and of moral qualities. The Indian dictum is right : man frames his gods in man's likeness.

That is what had evidently happened in the Aryan society. A certain degree of civilisation had been reached. The old belief in powers and forces was still there, but these forms were

and more chiefly characterized by physical strength. The mystic force of the solemn engagement, of truth, played a prominent rôle in the imagination of the people. A foundation had been laid on which Zarathustra could later on base his sublime comception of spiritual forces as regulating the universe : wisdom, purity and righteousness. And on the same foundation Indian thinkers later on built up their magnificent ideal of eternal truth and unchangeable reality rising above and beyond the vicissitudes of phenomenal life, the struggle for material existence and transient well-being.

Mitra and Varuna, the guardians of law and truth, are accordingly conceived in the likeness of Aryan kings, who watched over the laws and institutions and punished criminals. But even as such guardians they were themselves free, without bonds and fetters,—they were *Adityas,* proceeding from *aditi,* unfettered freedom. Aditi is again one of these apparently abstract terms, meaning freedom from all bonds and limits, that which nobody can fetter. It was conceived in the usual way, as a mystic force, and often viewed in a half personal form, as a kind of goddess, the mother of those who were *ádityas,* without limit in their power and activity. And at a comparatively early date Aditi appears in mythic interpretation as a divine mother, and the *ádityas* as her offspring.

The chief *ádityas* were Mitra and Varuna, but already in the Rigveda we find a whole group of deities designated in this way and invoked in not less than six hymns. In one place six such *ádityas* are named, in another their number is seven, in a third we hear of eight, and in later times there are twelve *ádityas,* who are then considered as various manifestations of the sun, the sun itself being often called *áditya.*

This is certainly a later development, and if we consider the character of the different *adityas* as apparent from their names, we arrive at a different result. There does not seem to have been any difinite fixed conception about the number of the *ádityas,* nor about the names of the minor members of the group. One is called *bhága,* good fortune, lot; another *amsa,* share, part, portion; a third *daksha,* able, clever; while a fourth bears a name which we cannot explain etymologically,

viz., Aryaman. We often hear about his ways and paths, and sometimes he seems to be especially connected with marriage, while elsewhere he appears to have been considered as the typical ancestor, the chief of the *pitarah*. He may have something to do with the mystic forces which were considered to bind the members of the family together, while names such as *amsa* and *bhága* lead us to think of common property and the shares therein alloted to the individuals. At all events there is no solar idea apparent in connection with the *ádityas*, and the theory according to which they should be the sun, the moon and the five planets has in reality no other foundation than the supposed fact that their number was originally seven.

It seems probable that the idea of grouping together certain divine forces which were of special importance for the organisation of life in the family and state, was common to the Indian and Iranian Aryans. For we find a similar group, that of the *Amesha Spentas*, in the Avesta. And here it is quite clear that we have not to do with celestial bodies like sun, moon and planets, but with psychical or psycho-physical forces and potencies,—judicial ideas and so forth,—and the case with the Vedic *ádityas* is similar. Like Mitra and Varuna they point to a certain spiritualizing of the ancient idea of force and energy, a reshaping under the influence of an advanced civilisation.

In this connection I shall not try to discuss the question whether the ideas underlying these gods have been borrowed from, or influenced by an old foreign civilisation. At all events they had become incorporated in the Aryan period, as a part of Aryan mentality. And from the view-point of the student of Indian religions, they are an Aryan inheritance, whatever their origin may be.

It is a very incomplete sketch which I have been able to give of the Indo-European and the Aryan inheritance in the religious conceptions of the Vedic Indians, and it is far less comprehensive than the picture usually drawn of Indo-European religion. But I feel convinced that it is much more reliable, and it will probably be possible to fill it in with more details in future.

The religious mentality that we can discern may be summed up as follows :

In the first, the Indo-European, stage of development, man felt his dependency on higher forces which he could not control, but which he might reasonably hope to conciliate and to utilize. Foremost in his mind were the mystical forces of life and generation, manifested before his eyes wherever new beings seemed to come into existence, or where grass and vegetation grew up. These forces were not merely theoretic entities, but some sort of substance or emanation.

But then the difference between them and living beings, *i.e.* individual men, was in his eyes not so fundamental as it is to us. The forces themselves were more or less conceived in man's likeness, though they had a much wider sphere of action. The ideas of fatherhood and motherhood were manifest in each father and mother, but they were something much greater, and might be observed wherever somebody or something comes into existence. Behind all such occurences it was possible to observe the action of ideal fatherhood and motherhood, viewed as a great primeval couple, a great Father and a great Mother, because the Indo-European mind tended to give a personal touch even to what we would call mere abstract notions.

We seem to discern traces of an ancient worship of these forces in old ceremonies which were probably performed in order to realise them, to instigate them into activity. The primitive conception was probably of the same kind as what we find in so many places : if one wishes to produce some effect, an imitation of the desired object is made up, and this imitation is more or less the thing itself. The eternal forces are set in motion, and the machinery goes on, following its own laws. Man can see the symbol with his eyes, but behind the symbol is the eternal reality of power, all-pervading power, which once manifested in the symbol goes on acting in accordance with its own laws.

The underlying feeling is one of dependency, but when man is able to bring about the symbolical representation of eternal power, he becomes connected with this power itself, gets a share in it and is filled with a vague sense of universal law which makes himself part of a larger world and a higher realm, where the limitations of earthly existence have disappeared. The same

all-pervading forces which produce life and growth are also active within himself.

We have before us germs which in the course of time were destined to sprout in the sublime thinking of the Upanishads, but they are still undeveloped, and we are strongly impressed with the primitive nature of the underlying ideas. But then we also see in the ancient denomination of these forces as *deva,* connected with light and the sky, a tendency to raise them above the limits of worldly existence, beyond darkness and night into unlimited realms.

In the later Aryan period, we can observe how conceptions of a somewhat different kind had come into the foreground. The fundamental idea is still the same, that of independent power and might. But, in addition to the forces which produce life and make it possible, the eye is fixed on those which regulate life in human society : law and justice and the sanctity of solemn engagements. The Aryan society had reached a higher stage of development. At its head were powerful kings, whose foremost duty was to protect the established order of things, as the guardians of law and order. And this state of affairs is reflected in the belief in heavenly kings, the guardians of truth, who made man stick to his obligations and punished every transgression.

Religion had acquired a distinct social and moral turn, which had not, of course, been entirely lacking in the previous period, but which now became foremost in man's mind. The Aryan conception of royalty had led to the notion of great heavenly rulers, with a stronger personal stamp than what we can see in the earlier period. And in the characterization of these gods as issuing from *aditi,* unlimitedness, we have a germ which might be developed into the idea of an almighty god.

But the development is only in its beginning, and the old conception is still there. Mitra and Varuna are still intimately connected with the special potencies for which they stand, and in spite of their relationship to unlimited freedom, they are the guardians of *rita,* as if this very *rita,* eternal truth and reality, were a still more powerful and important thing, beyond them and above them.

THE SPIRIT OF HINDU LAW

By ATULCHANDRA GUPTA.

One superstition about Hindu Law, which may discourage its study, requires demolition. This is the theory that Hindu Law did not develop beyond the stage,—said to be an invariable early one in the evolution of all systems of law,—when legal rules proper are not yet distinguished from religious and moral injunctions.

This fiction was started on its effective career by Sir Henry Maine, in the sixties of the last century, in his *Ancient Law*. The book was the first work in the English language on Historical Jurisprudence and is reputed to be still the foremost in the field. But scientific interest is not the only motive which seems to have moved its author. Under the garb of scientific inquiry, his work is propaganda of European superiority of a most insidious type.

Progress, says this Anglo-Saxon jurist, is an exception in the history of human races. It is practically confined to the peoples of Western Europe. With other peoples, for instance the Orientals, stagnation is the rule. In arts and institutions of civilisation they develop up to a certain stage and then stagnate or deteriorate. Of this geralisation, which no doubt is meant to be the scientific basis and moral justification of West-European domination of the earth, Maine gives Hindu Law as an illustration. The law of this oriental people, he asserts, did not succeed in differentiating itself from moral and religious rules, and, quite in keeping with his theory, stagnated at this semi-primitive stage of amorphous homogeneity.

It seems to be remarkable with what cool assurance a professed votary of scientific study of law speaks and theorises on a system of law of which, as his annotator Sir Frederick Pollock tells us, he cared to know little beyond the names of some of the works in which that law is contained. Clearly, in dealing with an Oriental civilisation, this European scholar did not feel any very strenuous call on the honesty of his scholarship. One

cannot, it seems, be imperial in politics without being superficial in culture.

But I suspect that Maine knew something more than the names of the Dharmasástras. He doubtless knew of Sir William Jones' translation of the Manu Samhita and in all probability passed his eyes over some of its pages. And what a medley he must have found there! Mythical cosmogony; duties of the student, of the householder and of the ascetic; rules of etiquette, of purification and penance; injunctions moral and ceremonial as to the minutest details of every day life; and side by side, rules of Austinian positive law. And Maine was told that this book was a code of Hindu Law. Contrasting this code with other codes of law known to him,—the Pandects, or the Code Napoleon,—how could he entertain any doubt that Hindu Law failed to reach the stage at which positive law is clearly distinguished from morality and religion?

I am sure Maine did not take the trouble of reading Jones' translation of Manu from cover to cover. For any one of ordinary intelligence who does this cannot fail to notice that though Manu's *Dharmasástra* treats of moral, religious, social and legal rules, it never confuses one kind of rules with another, —the difference between the various kinds being brought out as clearly as, say, in Austin's *Province of Jurisprudence determined,* and their relation and inter-dependence in concrete life realised with infinitely greater clearness than Austin ever attained. Manu's *Dharmasástra* is not a code of Hindu Law as the French or the German code is a code of French or German law, but it is a treatise of which such a code of Hindu Law forms a part. Maine was unconscious of the difference and was misled.

What then is a Dharmasástra, or rather what is *Dharma* of which the Dharmasástra is the treatise or code? For a reply we shall not have to theorise about a possible synthetic principle which might have been subconsciously working in the minds of the composers of the Dharmasástras and led them to unite, in one treatise, topics which to some appear so very disparate. For

the ancient Hindu writers were quite conscious of this unifying principle. For instance Medhátithi, the earliest commentator of the Manu Samhitá known to us, explains that the term Dharma means 'duty' (VII, 4); it is 'used to indicate the injunctions and prohibitions as to what ought to be done and what ought to be refrained from' (1, 2). 'Dharma' thus means 'duty' in general,—duties of all kinds,—domestic, social, political, juristic and religious. The thread of unity which binds together in one code these varied duties is of course the greatest, if not the only principle of union we know, *viz.*, the synthetic unity of human personality.

Social, religious and juristic rules must not be confused with one another, but their unity also must not be overlooked. They are rules of action for the same human person in his different relations, the threads of which do not avoid each other but twine and intertwine to form the texture of civilised human life. The writers of the Dharmasástras saw the difference as well as the unity of those rules. If any moderns fail to appreciate their view-point, they are either ignorant of the differentiation made, or oblivious of the unity realised in the Dharmasástras.

The Dharmasástra which goes by the name of Yájnavalkya Smriti makes a threefold division of the topics of discussion and divides the Code into three corresponding books or *adhyáyas, viz.*, Achára, Vyávahára and Práyaschitta.

The first deals with rules of domestic and social life, elaborated on the basis of a conception of society as consisting of four classes of men with different functions and of life as divided into four periods of different activity. Education, marriage, domestic life, and life ultra-domestic, when man is set free from social bonds and is alone with his spirit, are here dealt with. The domestic and social relations, however, just as with the ancient Greeks and Romans, are not confined to living men, but extend to the dead ancestors and to the gods and other spirits. Appropriate observances and rituals following from these relations are accordingly laid down. The last section of this Book deals with 'Kingly duties' (*Rája-Dharma*) and is a chapter on statecraft and administrative law.

This section leads naturally to the second book on Vyávahára. It deals exclusively with positive law, law in the strict juristic sense, both substantive and procedural. The term Vyávahára means litigation or legal dispute. As the Mitákshara explains; "Vyávahára is the claim made by one for himself in opposition to the claim of another, as for example when someone asserts, 'this corn field is mine', and another also asserts in opposition to him, 'it is mine'." (Mit. II, 4). Or as the Yájnavalkya Smriti itself says, "The application by a person to the King, being overpowered by another in ways against law and custom, forms the subject matter of Vyávahára". (Yaj. II, 5). The term was also used in the more general sense of juristic act, legal transaction, act in the law. In this Book therefore no act or conduct is discussed which has no legal consequences, and no rules are laid down which are only moral or religious. Nay more, law is here conceived from the extremely practical point of view of law-courts. The King must decide disputes between his subjects. What then are the different kinds of disputes and what are the principles and rules for deciding on each kind of dispute? This is the background for discussion on law in the Dharmasástras, and this is how the so-called eighteen heads of litigation or rather subjects of legal disputes (*astádasa viváda padáni*) are introduced as a convenient classification for giving a statement of law in its various branches. We must resist the natural temptation of calling these heads or subjects *forms of action,* for no peculiarity of procedural form distinguishes one head from another. The principle of division is not *form of procedure* but *variety of legal relation.*

The Third Book on Práyaschitta deals with purification and penance. Of the five sections which constitute the Book the first four logically belong to the Book on Achára. The first section lays down rules for funeral and after-death rites and rituals, as also for purification from impurity by births and deaths of relations. The second section gives exceptions to the general rules regulating life and conduct in circumstances of difficulty. The next two sections deal with life in the last two of its four periods. It is the last section which deals with the

proper subject matter of the Book, *viz.*, Penance. The concept of penance the Hindus had in common with the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is deduced from the idea of survival after bodily death and from recognition of relations with powers which are supra-mundane. The theory on which it works is, in the words of Medhatithi, "that a lesser degree of pain voluntarily suffered here and now is calculated to avoid far greater pain hereafter, consequent on guilty conduct; just as", says the commentator, "pain of bitter medicine and of low diet avoide the pain of disease; or just as a person receives only half the punishment who himself notifies to the king his own violation of any law." (Commentary on *Manu XI, 46*).

This scheme of Yájnavalkya Smriti, of the tripartite division of topics, is the common scheme, more or less apparent, of all complete codes of Dharmasástra. I speak of a complete code of Dharmasástra, for some Smriti Samhitás do not deal with all the three subjects of Achára, Vyávahára and Práyaschitta, but confine themselves to one or two of them only. Many appear to have been books only on Achara and Prayaschitta, and it is of interest to note that the well-known Náradasmriti deals exclusively with Vyávahára or positive law, altogether omitting Achára and Práyaschitta.

It is perhaps unnecessary now to repeat that one would only be misled by seeking Hindu Law everywhere in the Dharmasástras. It is to be found only in one part of those treatises, viz., the part dealing with Vyávahara, excepting the law relating to those relationships whose social aspect is of more importance than the legal, *e.g.* marriage, which naturally forms a part of the Achára portion of the Dharmasástras. But it does not seem that obvious consequences of this evident fact are always kept in mind. And the result is a good deal of confusion of ideas in matters of Hindu Law even in quarters where it is to be least expected.

One such confusion relates to the subject of the sources of Hindu Law. Modern text books of Hindu Law agree in telling us that these sources according to Hindu theory are

enumerated in the text of Manu which says that "the Veda, the Smriti, the usage of the Good, and what is agreeable to one's own soul have been said to be the four-fold direct proofs of Dharma", (Manu, II, 12); or in the variant text of Yajnavalkya which adds to Manu's four a fifth source, *viz.*, "desire born of due deliberation" (Yaj. I, 7).

Now obviously neither 'what is agreeable to one's own soul' nor 'desire born of due deliberation', whatever they may mean, can be conceived as a source of positive law. And when, as we must, we give up the ignorant supposition that Hindu Law did not distinguish between ethico-religious and legal duties, the only way to treat these texts, as enumeration of sources of law, is by taking them as enumerating generally sources of all kinds of duties, legal and social, as well as moral and religious, that is to say of 'Dharma' in general,—of 'Vyávahára Dharma' as well as of Achára and Práyaschitta Dharmas. So that each of these sources is not necessarily a source of all kinds of Dharma, but some may be sources exclusively of one or two kinds of Dharma only. And we may say that though the Veda, the Smriti and the usage of the Good are sources of Law (Vyávahára) as well as of other duties, agreeableness to the soul and deliberate desire are sources of Achára and Práyaschitta only, but not of Law or Vyávahára.

But even this modified view of these texts as enumeration of sources of positive law seems to me to be inadequate. For the fact is that these texts were not really meant to be enumerations of the sources of Vyávahára or positive law, but only of Achára, which in a broad sense includes Práyaschitta also. The text of Manu quoted above is merely a repetition of an earlier text which says: 'the entire Veda is the source or proof of Dharma, also the memory of persons versed in the Veda and concentrated on it, as also the usage and the self-satisfaction of the good (and learned in the Veda)' (Manu II, 6). The repetition was for indicating, according to some commentators, the close of a section, *viz.*, that on sources of Dharma, in pursuance with the usual practice of writers in this respect (Medha. II, 12).

But if it is certain that according to ancient Hindu theory all other sources of Dharma enumerated in these texts rest ultimately on the authority of the Veda, it is also equally certain that, according to that theory, the positive law of Vyávahára, or at least a good portion of it, has *not* the Veda as its source or authority.

To appreciate this point fully, one must understand the theory of the limits of the authority of the Veda in the sphere of human activity, *viz.* that the Veda is not authority in all spheres of human acts. When an end is desirable, and it is knowable from experience and logical reasoning what acts lead to that end, the Veda is no authority for those acts. For its authority is limited to acts between which and their described consequences no empirical or logical relationship can be discerned. It is only in that super-mundane and super-rational sphere that the authority of the Veda prevails, for there no other source of knowledge is possible but the authority of the Vedas. And this theory is also clearly indicated in Medhatithi's reply to the objection that the assertion of the Veda as the source of Dharma in Manu's text is useless. For the proof that it is the source of Dharma can never rest on the authority of any texts as they themselves would then be in need of further authority. That proof must be in some reasoning which does not depend on the authority of Vedic or Smriti texts. Medhatithi admits the validity of the view that texts could not prove the Veda to be the source of Dharma, which must be proved by reasoning independent of texts. But he replies that Manu's text is only meant for those who are not able to follow the difficult process of reasoning involved, but have to rely on those who can and who have satisfied themselves that the reasoning is valid. And Medhatithi concludes with a remark most important for our purposes: *"There are other matters also, e.g. the Smriti dealing with Vyávahára or positive law, which rest on reason (and not on the Veda).*

This clear statement of Medhatithi leaves no room for doubt that even in theory the ancient Hindu writers did not conceive positive law to rest on the authority of the Veda. The source of positive law is experience and logic and not the Veda,—

it is *nyáyamûla* and not *Vedamûla*. According to ancient Hindu theory the Veda is the ultimate root of what Christian Europe calls 'religion', and thus, in that theory, positive law is non-religious. It is a part of Dharma in the broad sense of duty, but it is separate from the 'religious' portion of Dharma.

To take the analogy of familiar instances, the ethical principles of the Dharmasástra played, to some extent, the same part in Hindu positive law as did the *jus naturale* in the Roman, and *Equity* in the English system. But the effect produced seems to have been less extensive. The positive law of Vyávahára that we find in the eighth and ninth chapters of Manu, or in the second book of Yájnavalkya, is fundamentally the same as in the Dharmasthîya section of Kautilya. And it is difficult to doubt the correctness of Mr. K. P. Jayaswal's view that politics and positive law, Rája-Dharma and Vyávahára, were not in the beginning integral parts of the Dharmasástra, whose proper subject was Achára including Práyaschitta. It is later in history that Dharmasástra made law and politics its own, and Arthasastra gradually ceased to be studied and developed as a separate science.

This is the reason why the section on Rája-Dharma or statecraft does not quite fit into the position assigned to it in the Dharmasástra, and the commentators have to resort to explanations to find its connecting link with the other subjects. And when these commentators try at last to hide the original source from which statecraft and positive law came into the Dharmasástra, and to pretend that these were at all times within its scope, their explanations grow laboured indeed. Any one who reads what Visvarûpa and Vijñánesvara write in explanation of Yajnavalkya (II, 21) will realise what we mean.

Some Mimamsa writers started the doctrine that as things are necessary for the performance of all sacrifices, property in things is a religious concept and should be regulated by religious principles. Writers on Dharmasástra repudiate this view with practical unanimity and maintain that ownership is a secular concept. It is *Loukika* (temporal) depending on usage amongst

men, and not an institution created and guided by rules ultimately derived from the Veda whose validity is not open to the test of experience and reason. As the subject throws considerable light on the general theory of the secular or non-religious character of positive law I shall summarise here Vijnanesvara's discussion in the Mitakshara. (II, 114).

Is ownership a concept known exclusively from the Sastra, or is it a concept reached through other and secular sources of knowledge? Those who maintain the former doctrine argue like this:—There are Smriti texts laying down the modes of acquisition of ownership. For example there is the text of Gautama which says, "A man becomes owner by inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure and finding. Acceptance of gift is for the Brahmana an additional mode, conquest for the Kshatriya, and gain by labour for the Vaisya and the Sudra." If ownership were known and determined by other methods of proof such texts would be useless and without any significance.

Again if ownership were a fact of perceptual experience complaints such as 'my property has been stolen by this man' would be meaningless for the ownership would be in the thief. And moreover if such were the nature of ownership there could not have been any doubts in a matter of disputed ownership whether it belongs to this man or to the other as there is no doubt when in fact a thing is of gold that it is gold, or of silver that it is of silver. But notwithstanding these arguments ownership is in fact a matter of secular experience, for it serves secular ends and purposes like food-grains and other earthly objects. A thing known from the text of Sastra alone, like the *âhabania* fire for instance, does not serve any secular purposes. It cannot be objected that *âhabania* fire does perform temporal actions like cooking, for what performs cooking is not fire in its character as *âhabania* fire but as ordinary visible fire. It is not possible to maintain that what serves secular purposes like sale, etc., is the material object like gold whilst ownership is supersensible; for a purpose like sale is served not by the thing but by ownership in the thing. What is not one's property will not serve his purpose like sale.

Again, ownership is a recognised institution even amongst foreigners of the border countries who have never known the rules of Sastras, for we see them practise sale and purchase.

Further, if ownership were regulated entirely by the rules of Sastra there would have been no ownership at all in things acquired by a man by modes pronounced sinful for his particular caste and his sons could not have inherited those things, as for instance when a Brahmana acquires wealth by trade and commerce or by accepting gifts from those who are unworthy. But it is because ownership is a matter of secular usage that it does exist in things acquired by sinful methods and such property is inherited. The acquired may have to perform penance, but no guilt attaches to his heirs who take ownership by inheritance. And similarly, as the rules for acquisition are meant to serve secular purposes of men, a religious sacrifice does not become invalid because performed with objects acquired in violation of the rules, but guilt attaches to the acquirer for the violation ; and hence ownership has to be recognised in things acquired in contravention of the rules.

It may not be argued that all this leads to the position that there is ownership in things got even by theft, etc., for such are not recognised amongst men as modes for acquiring ownership and the idea would be contradictory to established usage.

And the fact that there may be doubts in case of disputed ownership does not prove that ownership is not a matter of secular experience, for such doubts result from doubts as to existence of titles creating ownership.

No doubt there are texts in the Smriti laying down valid modes for acquiring ownership ; but it does not follow that ownership is not therefore a matter of secular usage. For there are also Smriti texts laying down the order of succession to the property of a deceased man ; and that is because though this order depends on recognised usage it is recited in the text for preventing mistake and confusion as there are many heirs of a man in the shape of his many relations.

I make no apology for these long extracts, for I expect that those who are interested in the question will read them with pleasure and will not fail to notice their genuine juristic ring.

But the last point made by Vijñánesvara in answer to the first argument of his opponents deserves careful notice and perhaps a little elucidation. The point of the reply is that in the Vyávahára, or the positive law portion of the Dharmasástra texts, do not necessarily lay down rules of religious duty based on the Veda, but they may very well be only codified expressions

of established and recognised usage. The illustration given is interesting, *viz.*, the rules regulating inheritance. They are not religious injunctions, but statements of recognised practice amongst men. As Vijñánesvara says elsewhere: In this section (on inheritance) the texts are mostly narrations of well-recognised usage' (Mitakshara II, 118). The theory of ancient Hindu jurists therefore is clear. In the domain of positive law, dealing with the wordly ends and purposes of men, the Vedic religious principles, which are supra-sensible and extra-mundane, can have no scope. 'According to all writers', says Mitra Misra, 'the Vyávahára Smriti or positive law mostly narrates what is well-established and recognised amongst men'. (*Vîramitrodaya* by Jibananda Vidyasagar p. 534).

The fact that the Hindu position in law is essentially secular and non-religious does not mean that there is nothing in that law derived from the religious ideas of the Hindus. For, apart from the effect of the restrictive action of the ethico-religious Dharmasástra principles, there are undoubtedly many rules of Hindu Law which owe their origin to Hindu religion. Take the illustration of one of the worst cases. 'If a Sudra listens intentionally to a recitation of the Veda, his ears shall be filled with molten tin or lac; if he recites Vedic texts his tongue shall be cut out', enjoins Gautama. It is a rule or positive law enforcing with the power of the State what was conceived to be a religious principle.

But it is only want of discrimination which leads any one to infer from such examples that law and religion are here confused. One may as well say that a law making vaccination compulsory confuses law and medicine. Law has no ends derived from itself. It is a means for realising in a particular way some ends derived from the different interests of life; and religion is one such interest. It is true that there are limits, varying within more or less wide range, to the proper seeking to realise ends by legal means; and it may be that in a developed system of law this limit is more quickly reached for religion than in the case of other interests.

But can it be charged against mature Hindu Law that it sought to realise more religious interests by legal means than say, for example, modern English Law? It is only ignorance of both systems of law which will embolden one to an affirmative answer.

'The Sunday Observance Act' of 1677, which punishes tradesmen or others for doing or exercising "any worldly labour business or work of their ordinary callings upon the Lord's Day or part thereof (works of necessity and charity only excepted)" is still living law on the Statute Book of England. And in the year 1915 one Fairburn was convicted and fined 5*s*. for purchasing on a Sunday, from a refreshment house-keeper, sweets to the value of 3*d*. as it amounted to aiding and abetting the refreshment house-keeper in the exercise of his ordinary calling in contravention of the Act of 1677 [(1916) 1 K. B. 218]. In 1906 the legislature of the Dominion of Canada made it unlawful for any person on the Lord's Day "to run, conduct or convey by any mode of conveyance any excursion on which passengers are conveyed for hire and having for its principal or only object the carriage on that day of such passengers for amusement or pleasure." [(1925) A. C. 384].

In the year 1917, five learned British Judges in England's highest Court of Justice heard arguments for five days and considered judgment for three months for deciding whether a bequest to a Society whose main object was "to promote the principle that human conduct should be based upon natural knowledge, and not upon supernatural belief, and that human welfare in this world is the proper end of all thought and action" was not invalid according to the law of England as the object of the Society involved a denial of the tenets of Christianity. In the end, the majority of the judges found a way of upholding the gift after overruling previous decisions, but not without dissent, and that from the Lord Chancellor (Lord Finlay) himself. Said the Lord Chancellor: "It has been repeatedly laid down by the Courts that Christianity is part of the law of the land, and it is the fact that our civil polity is to a large extent based upon the Christian religion. This is notably so with regard to the law of marriage and the law affecting the family.

..... The fact that Christianity is recognised by the law as the basis to a great extent of our civil polity is quite sufficient for holding that the law will not help endeavours to undermine it." [(1917) A. C. 406]. After this pronouncement from one of England's twentieth century Lord Chancellors, for scholars of Christian Europe to feel surprised at the fancied religiosity of Hindu Law is indeed most surprising.

The serious study of Hindu Law has suffered owing to the preponderance of exclusive historical interest. One result has been to attract and confine attention to the primitive strata of Hindu Law to the neglect of the developed and the mature system. The tree has been lost sight of in the seed. A recent illustration is Professor Hopkin's chapter on Hindu Law in the new Cambridge History of India. I have space for one example only.

The Professor devotes a disproportionately large portion of his short paper to an account of Ordeals in Hindu Law. Trial by Ordeal is not a speciality of Hindu Law. It prevailed in early Hindu Law just as in other early Aryan laws. A study of the ordeals of Hindu Law is of interest to a comparative study of this primitive method of trial. But what is undoubtedly of far greater importance to the jurist is the process by which Hindu Law set at naught these primitive methods and substituted in their place the rational method of proof by witnesses and documents. But this is exactly the thing which does not interest Professor Hopkins; though he need not have travelled beyond Yájnavalkya for a clear account of this process: 'Judicial proof consists of documents, evidence of possession, and witnesses. If none of these are available, resort is to be had to proofs divine, *i.e.* ordeals.'

The Mitákshara thus brings out the meaning of this text: "It is from this text alone that one knows that in the absence of human rational proofs, ordeal is a mode of judicial proof, for the nature and validity of ordeal as proof can only be known from the texts of sastras. And therefore, where of two disputants before a court of law one has human proof and the

other resorts to ordeal or divine proof, the human proof is to be accepted." As Kátyáyana says, "if one adduces human proof and the other proof divine, the king must accept the human proof and not the divine". (Mitakshara II, 22). I shall also quote the gloss 'Subodhini': "If ordinary empirical method of proof is available it is improper to resort to the supra-sensible. The nature of ordeal and its validity as proof are known only from the Sastra, and it is thus supra-mundane and supra-sensible. And so long as empirical proof is possible there is no scope for the supra-sensible mode of proof".

This method of restricting the scope and of practically superseding a primitive traditional institution of law by classifying judicial proof into human (*mánusham*) and divine (*daivîm*) is an interesting device in the development of all systems of law. It is the same method by which Roman Law first restricted and then superseded the ancient cumbrous method of conveyance, the *mancipatio*, by the classification of things into *res mancipi* and *res nec mancipi*. The Hindu Law got rid of the primitive religious and semi-religious elements by developing a sharp distinction between things mundane and things supra-mundane, between what is religious and what is temporal, by giving to God what is God's, but to Cæsar what is Cæsar's.

But these matters do not seem to interest a certain class of students of Hindu Law. They dive down to what is primitive and undeveloped, and stick there. They are the scholarly analogue of the Western globe-trotter whose only interests in modern India are the devil-dancer and the snake-charmer.

The spirit of Hindu Law is its essential secularism. The condemnation for its religious bias, and the veneration for its ubiquitous religiousness both thrive on ignorance.

"WITH A GRAND SCHEME IN MIND."

With a grand scheme in mind
    I toil day and night,
Till something large is built at last,—
    truth and illusion blended.

But my tiny hopes wait long,—the joys that are frail,—
    in the vision of which mingle
Some stray notes of a song, a breath of hidden flowers,
    the whisper in the shade of a familiar tree,
And a leisure brimming over with dream bubbles.

When God's will to create shook the sky
    into fiery whirls,
His power, in the beginning of years,
    built up its triumph in towering hills.
But His dream waited millions of barren nights,
    before He smiled on His first shy flower.

RABINDRANATH

CASTE PECULIARITIES IN PRE-BRITISH BENGAL

By Panchcowrie Banerjee.

[*Last instalment of the series of notes left by the late Author.*]

The Puranic story of the *Churning of the Ocean,* read between the lines, serves to throw a curious light on the origin of the Bengali people.

Mount Mandára, so the story goes, was cast into the sea and, with the great serpent Sêsha coiled round it as a rope, was used as a churning staff,—the *Asuras* (non-Aryans) taking their stand on the east of the mountain pulling on the snake by its head-end, assisted by the *Suras* (Aryans) on the West, pulling the tail-end. In the result, the *Suras* gained as their share the spoil yielded up by the agitated waters, consisting among other valuables of the *Sôma* plant and a pot of the nectar of immortality; while to the lot of the Asuras fell only the froth from the mouth of the exhausted serpent.

Mount Mandára is to be found in the south of the district of Bhagalpore (in modern Bihar), near Bausi railway station. The villagers round about it still call the inhabitants of the region on its east as *ahiphêna*-(opium, *lit.* serpent-foam)-eating Asuras. These non-Aryan tribes are of yellowish complexion, addicted to opium and hemp drugs, and fish-eaters. On the West of this mountain was the limit of Aryávarta, the territory of the old Aryan settlers. And in the Rámáyana as well as in the Vishnu Purána we read that the mouth of the Ganges was then situate within a short distance from the junction of the Kausiki (Kosi) and Ganges rivers. Here, then, must have been the domicile of the Bengali of those days.

It seems to me that this points to the conclusion that Bengal was originally inhabited by Mongolian races who led a maritime life. They had, as I have remarked before, a civilisation of their own, distinct from that of the white-complexioned, meat-eating, *Sôma*-juice-drinking Aryans. And, as we have also noted, they never accepted the religion or social system of the

Vedic Aryans in their entirety. My reading leads me to the belief that Chárváka, the famous atheist, was of Bengal; and so of course was Kapila, the tawny sage, founder of the rationalistic Sánkhya philosophy, whose *ásram* at the mouth of the Ganges has been successively shifted southwards, as the sea receded. The *ásram* was originally near Nalhati, between the rivers Ajay and Mourakshi; then in the vicinity of Navadwip; next at Magra-ghat, to the north of Tribeni; finally it is now at Saugor, though the sea has been subsequently thrust back still further south.

Kapila, Kanáda and Gautama were the three sages whose originality gained them special distinction in Bengal, and it was their teaching which largely moulded Hindu thought, not only in the east, but also in the west of India, preparing the ground for the advent of the Buddha. The Maháyána branch of Buddhism was adopted in Mithila and in Bengal, and thence travelled further East to Tibet, China and Japan. The Jain cult must have spread in Bengal before that of Siddhárta, the the Buddha. In the *Sahajia* literature we find refutations of the doctrines of Jainism, and in the songs of the Siddhácháryas there are references to Jain opposition. Be that as it may, Jainism has been distinctly influenced by the ideas and technology of Bengal Vaishnavism, the passive austerity of the former being largely softened by the emotionalism of the latter.

I may also refer, in passing, to the activities, now nearly forgotten, of the two notorious iconoclasts, Kálápáhár and Virûpáksha; the one a Brahmin of Upper Bengal who embraced Islam and wrought havoc with the stone images in the temples, Hindu as well as Buddhist, all over the province; the other a Tantric devotee, who acquired the reputation of being able to split any stone image of the gods, on which he cast his evil eye. Their activities gave rise to the practice, initiated by Krishnánanda Agamvágish, of worshipping clay images, that are invested with divinity for the purpose, and divested thereof immediately after, which still prevails in Bengal but nowhere else in India.

The Bengali has thus always been characterised by his independence of thought, and has time and again brought about

revolutionary disturbances in the social order sought to be imposed by the conquering Aryan.

The Vedic *varnásrama dharma,* or hereditary caste system, was destroyed by Buddhism throughout the greater part of India. Thereafter the large-heartedness of her first Muhammadan rulers made for a great approachment between the different races and castes. The Vaishnavism founded by Chaitanya was a development of the Sahajia cult, an offshoot of Buddhism. The Tantric worship of Shakti was the outcome of the Vajrayán and Kálachakrayán sects of Maháyána Buddhism. And neither Vaishnavism nor Tantricism, which between them held sway over Hindu Bengal, laid any stress on caste. As a matter of fact, the ferocious caste feeling, manifested in and fostered by the doctrine of the *Survival of the Fittest,* which obtains amongst the white races of the West as against races of a different colour, never prevailed in India, nor anywhere in Asia, at any period of her history.

At, or a little before, the time of Maharaja Krishna-chandra of Navadwip (Nuddea), a reaction in favour of Brahmin predominance had set in under his influence, and this was the state of things which became crystallised for the first time into the rigid Orthodoxy since in evidence, thanks to the hard and fast legal system introduced by the British Courts, guided as they were by the Brahmin Judge-Pandits of Navadwip, Tribeni and Bhattapalli.

The system of caste, which survived after the Buddhist age up to immediately before the British domination, was based on occupation,—comprising mainly the Profession Castes as Risley has called them,—and even the Brahmin attained and held his caste by virtue of his priestly functions. In the genealogical statements which had been compiled for each and every family of note in Bengal, we find evidences of change from one caste into another, due to change of profession, or by way of penalty; and loss of caste simply meant loss of vocation. A reference to some of the social customs of the period, not yet wholly died out, may serve to make this clear.

The peculiar custom of appointing different kinds of persons to be Brahmins is noteworthy. During Chaitra, the last month

of the Bengali year, it is open to all local Hindus, men or women, irrespective of class or caste, to take up the rôle of *sannyásins* of Shiva, in Tarakeswar as well as in other endowed temples dedicated to Shiva. These are called Vrata-Brahmins, and are invested by the Mahanta, or Chief-Priest, with the sacred thread, the ochre robe and the mendicants' staff. They observe, for that month, a rigorous asceticism, and while so doing they are accorded the rank and dignity of Brahmins.

Sitalá Brahmins and Nág Brahmins are of a similar type. These are merely experts in the art of treating small-pox and snake-bite; but as such they are the acknowledged priests of Sitalá (the goddess of Small-pox) and Manasá (goddess of snakes) and are treated as Brahmins, though not of that caste by birth. In the same class as the vrata-Brahmins may be put the priests of Dharmarája, though their *vrata* or vow is not of a month, but lasts through all the twelve, for life. This Dharmarája is not Yama, the Lord of Death, to whom we Hindus give that title, but was a name of the Buddha, showing the Buddhist origin of these customs. In fact, it was a settled policy with the Buddhist monarchs, perhaps with the idea of lowering the prestige of the Brahmin born, to contrive in various ways the raising of all sorts and conditions of men to the dignity of Brahminhood. It may also be of interest to note here that of the vrata-ceremonies of our women, none of them Vedic, but mostly Buddhist or Jain in origin, are performed without the intervention of any kind of Brahmin at all, the women themselves acting as the priests; as for example, in the *vratas* concerning the worship of Chandi.

Some of our proverbs are instructive in this connection. I will give two instances. *Dhánê áman, játê Báman*: amongst rice the *áman,* amongst castes the *Báman.* This is not intended as an eulogy of Brahmin superiority, but indicates that in the making of the Brahmin, as in the cultivation of the *áman* or winter rice (which requires careful nurture and transplantation), a great deal of trouble has to be taken. This meaning is brought out in the genealogical literature to which I have referred, especially in the MS of Edu Misra. *Ját hárálê Káyeth*: lose caste, become *Káyeth;* which again is not intended as a slur on the Kayastha, but means that the occupation of the members of

that caste being various and general,—writer, factor, agent and what not,—it could afford shelter to those who became disqualified for the membership of castes involving skill in any special craft.

There is abundant evidence to show that this caste organisation was thoroughly democratic, being simply a system of professional distinction and mutual protection, involving no idea of superiority or inferiority. Before the revival of Brahmin prestige in Nuddea, to which I have referred, no special glory attached to the priestly function, nor did such revival affect all parts of Bengal outside the territory of Maharaja Krishnachandra. The power of outcasting was not confined to the priests,—the other castes could equally inflict social ostracism on the Brahmin.

Thus when Maharaja Nandakumar of Bhadrapur (near Rampurhat) obtained a high post under the Nawab of Murshidabad, he celebrated the occasion by a grand Durga-puja; but, instead of placing the order for his requirements with the weavers of his native village, he bespoke the more gorgeous stuffs of the Murshidabad craftsmen. A deputation of the Bhadrapur weavers waited on him, pointing out that a Puja which insultingly overlooked the just claims of his co-villagers could not find favour with the Goddess, and requesting him, not indeed to countermand the orders given to the Murshidabad weavers, but only to give some of his custom to Bhadrapur as well. In the pride of his new riches, the Maharaja turned a deaf ear to their pleading, whereupon the weavers went back, called a caste convention, and proclaimed a boycott against Nandakumar, which was not only taken up by all the weavers of West Bengal, but gradually extended to other craftsmen as well, so that it became impossible for the Maharaja to stir out of Murshidabad; for no porter, barber or washerman would render him service. Brahmin though he was, and holding one of the highest offices, Nandakumar had to come to terms, and the penalty prescribed was that he should feast all the artisans and a lakh of Brahmins as well. This gigantic feast evidently created a sensation at the time as is evidenced by the numerous verses and songs which commemorate the event.

I proceed to give a few more details, culled from different sources in the course of my random readings, about the process of buying and selling under the caste or trade-guild system then in vogue.

On the one hand, the local products had to be reserved for the local villagers, only the surplus being allowed to be sent off to the export markets; on the other, the local consumers were bound to give preference (as we have just seen in the case of Nandakumar) to local labour and craftsmanship. Nay further, each householder had his own appointed hereditary set of craftsmen and serving-men, whom he could not dismiss or supersede without assigning good reason. There also seem to have been certain restrictions to the use of articles of luxury; agriculturists and artisans, for instance, not being competent to indulge in the purchase of umbrellas or shoes; whilst gold-ornamented nether garments, such as gold-bordered *dhoties* or *sarees,* gold-worked shoes or sandals, were interdicted in the case of Brahmins and their consorts. This perhaps accounts for Benares gold-embroidered stuffs being all the rage after the removal of the embargo under the British regime.

These obligations and prohibitions were made effective by a system of registration of customers, and of purchase by passport. Every shopkeeper had a register in which the names of those entitled to custom, with their privileges and disabilities, were entered. Regular customers had to place their orders beforehand, with a deposit by way of earnest, usually in kind. Villagers who wanted to make purchases outside their own village, in larger trade centres or in places of pilgrimage, had to be provided with a passport from the local administrative authority, stating the commodities which he was permitted thus to purchase, and beyond which none would be supplied. There were recognised middlemen in these centres who introduced strange customers and had to be responsible for their identification. Emergent purchases were permitted through these middlemen on good reason being shown by the stranger for not having made the purchase in his own village. Foreign traders from Central Asia, Persia, China, had to report themselves to the local officials, get their prices passed, and undertake to abide

by these rules. Any traders supplying goods in contravention of rules were liable to be punished by the administrative authorities.

But the main sanction behind this social and economic system was the *thêko* or boycott, such as was put into operation against Maharaja Nandakumar. Of this there were different occasions and instruments.

One variety was the *Dharma-ghat* (the pot of Dharma) by which term we now-a-days translate the English word *strike,* but which in those days was an actual pot which found place in an elaborate ceremonial. The person or caste aggrieved by any breach of custom would firstly, either directly or through their headmen, call a convention of the headmen of all castes or communities of craftsmen, which assembled in the village market place, or temple courtyard, or other common meeting ground, and there the complaint would be formally lodged. Then ensued the *ghônt* (which word now means prying into other peoples' affairs) being a searching inquiry followed, in the case of an adverse finding, by a decree of boycott against the transgressor.

A priest was then called in, and a pot, called the pot of Dharmarája, set up. Here, again, Dharmarája refers to the Buddha; and the priest, called the Pandit, was a Brahmin *ex-officio,* but not necessarily by birth. The pot was filled with water, its mouth decorated with a fringe of mango leaves, and on its body was painted a *chakra* (the symbol of law) in vermillion. Beneath the *chakra* was written the name of the offender. In front of the pot was placed a bunch of betel leaves and some betel nuts. Dharmarája being invoked, the assembled members were feasted. At the conclusion, each headman taking up one of the betel leaves and nuts touched the sacred pot and swore to carry out the decree of the convention by refusing supplies to the culprit.

Finally the pot was carried round, by the complaining party in procession, to each market place far and near, and the finding of the convention and its decree were proclaimed by beat of drum. This was known as the drum of Dharma, and it became impossible for the transgressor to live in any place where it had sounded, so long as the ban was not removed.

Another variety (to give a West-Bengal specimen out of several variations obtaining in different parts of the province) was the pot of Lui (the Siddháchárya). This played a part in penalising offences against sexual morality, and was in the use chiefly amongst the potter caste. The pot, smeared with vermilion, being set up amidst the caste assembly, and Lui worshipped in due form, a goat was sacrificed and the pot filled with its entrails. After the usual feasting, the offence was stated and the inquiry held. If the charge involved the woman as well as the man, the decree covered both. A day was then notified, on which the matter was proclaimed in the market place, and the pot dashed to the ground in the presence of the crowd; the scattering of its noisome contents being the symbol of the formal publication of the scandal. Thenceforth the culprits would be outcast from decent society. The phrase "breaking the pot in the market place" yet survives in the Bengali, as an equivalent of the English "washing one's dirty linen in public".

The punishment for social non-conformity or moral delinquency was not always carried to the length of a boycott. A periodic exposure of the minor cases was deemed to be a sufficient deterrent. This was effected by satirical verses or songs, composed by such of the villagers as had a talent for doggerel, holding up to scorn or ridicule any doings in the locality which offended the community's sense of decency or decorum. On the last day of the year, or on certain other carnival days, these chroniclers of scandal, in the garb of clowns, would parade the village, singing or reciting their compositions for the edification of the public and to the disgrace of the delinquents. Sometimes such parade of the clowns would be preceeded by a *ghônt* (enquiry in convention) and those of the marked ones who shewed repentance in manner prescribed, were let off from such public exposure.

In the district of Maldah, the *Gambhîrá*, originally a festival of the *Náthi* sect of Buddhists, is still kept up by both sexes, of the upper as well as the lower classes, as an occasion for mixed singing and dancing and the publication of scandal; and is an annual terror to the local villagers. In Calcutta, the clowns of Jeliapara, going their rounds mounted on decorated carts, are

in evidence even now on the last day of each year, and though they no longer inspire dread, large crowds are attracted to hear their humorous effusions against social foibles or modern innovations which do not commend themselves to the man in the street.

Demos in those days was very much alive, not only in its power of effective punishment, but also in the organic coherence which it took pains to maintain between the different parts of the community. It was difficult for a stranger to intrude, for he would find neither custom nor employment, and only after proper introduction and inquiry would he be allowed a place in the community. On the other hand, any grievance of the meanest member of the community would not go unheeded, not even if it was against the rich and powerful, as we have already seen. No one was permitted to neglect social duties or remain unmindful of occasions of general rejoicing. Invitations had to be sent out all round in connection with marriages and other domestic ceremonies and the non-acceptance of any such invitation entailed the rendering of satisfactory explanation.

Social censure was likewise directed against persons convicted of offences against the State; on the other hand, during the Pathan domination, the decrees of these caste conventions were recognised by the administrative authorities and had to be registered with the local Kazi, who would sometimes call a second convention to reconsider the matter. But, while the *thêko* was in force, even Muhammadan priests would not accept a boycotted person as a convert, until he had been through the prescribed purification.

The instrument of Boycott was also made use of both by Hindus and Muslims for offences against Religion or Public Policy, entailing deprivation of social intercourse as well as of religious ministration. Certain curious consequences of this are still traceable in our latter-day society, the details of which, however, would be out of place in this connection.

ROMAIN ROLLAND ON CARL SPITTELER.

Translated by Dr. Kalidas Nag.

[*This is the first part of the tribute paid by M. Romain Rolland to the octogenarain poet of German-speaking Switzerland, Carl Spitteler, recently dead. I hope to present to the Indian public very soon the second part of the profoundly appreciative study of M. Rolland. We are grateful to him for giving us a glimpse of that eternal olympus of poetry where ever-new forms of Beauty are symbolising the ever-varied aspirations of Humanity. May our soul soar above the narrow bounds of our own national literature to salute new luminaries in the firmament of Eternal Beauty.—Tr.*].

The name of Carl Spitteler was made famous by a political discourse and by the Nobel Prize. It is not certain, as many people suppose, that the prize had the sanction of the Discourse. In Zurich, in 1915, the Swiss poet aged seventy publicly denounced the violation of Belgian neutrality and the politics of Germany. It required some courage : for Germany was the only country in Europe where the works of Spitteler were known and admired ; and the German Swiss were used to tackle prudently their dangerous neighbour. But courage, like genius, was natural to Spitteler. He did not attach so much importance to risks, even though large rather than small ; and once his words were spoken, he did not bother about them any more.

Others, however, bothered about him. From every side came towards his house in Luzern the homage of the Allies : articles and speeches deputations, adulations and public *fêtes*. To the deputations of Geneva the French Academy delegated several of its members. Then one had the pleasure of witnessing the spectacle of people, who had never read a single line of Spitteler, striking their sides in order to collect a bouquet of rhetorical flowers. Present at that comedy, I could measure the ignorance of the official personages. I remember, some such official of France, who was at his wits end ; but rather than read a book of Spitteler, he opened a German Dictionary, and finding that "spitze" means "point, summit", improvised on that theme several brilliant couplets. For the rest, the hosts of Spitteler,

the Latin-Swiss people, did not know anything either. I caught this scrap of a conversation, during the banquet of Geneva, while Spitteler was speaking:

"Have you read him?"

"No. And you?"

"Oh no! (*ironically*). First of all, poetry is too high for me, it is too far above . . . And then I don't know German. (*Interrupting himself*) Bravo! . . . "

Spitteler had a good laugh over it. He was not in the least astonished. He was never astonished about anything. After all he had taken them by surprise. One must cry aloud before the latest celebrity!

Ten years had passed since then, and does one know Spitteler a little more? What does one know about him in France? Two or three works of second rate importance: *Conrad the Lieutenant,* that *tour de force* of a poet of thought showing that he can, if it pleases him, deal with realism: Perhaps some had read *Imago* which profits by the present vogue of Freud. But his essential work, the monument which dominates the epic poetry of our time, the *Olympian Spring,* and the *Prometheus* (two books)—giant peaks of the Alps—how many in France, or even in Switzerland, have read them? Does any one suspect that Spitteler who is just dead, is in one line with Goethe and Milton?

Three Epics—the first, *Prometheus and Epimethus* and the third, *Prometheus der Dulder*—are the two aspects of the same engraving; the same theme rendered by different orchestras and in different styles. They are the works of a literary athlete of thirty-five, in the thick of the fight, with old fighters fighting for his victory, of which, however, he himself was not a dupe.

The central idea of the epics is the Revolt of Man, isolated, yet refusing to barter his free soul against conscience, moral official, patented, which presents itself before him, with the imperative gesture of a Master—the State as God. The suffering which he endures and the victorious combat which he wages, at the end, for the salvation of his torturers,—that same master, the God, and his delegates whose spiritual bankruptcy is self-evident, and who have no other recourse but to claim him as

their victim,—these combine to make this gigantic song of the solitary nude soul, whom mankind outrages and who saves mankind.

Olympischer Fruhling (the Olympian Spring) is, in itself, a cosmogony—like a Hindu epic—the immense unrolling of an Epoch of Nature: the new gods, the masters of the world in our age, rising from the bosom of the night to a dazzling Zenith —their plays and their struggles for the conquest of the sceptre; then the established order, the youth of Olympus, the happy plenitude! The hour of bliss is at an end; but the poet stops before the first cracking of the enchanted palace. He turns his face from the gloomy future. It is sufficient for him to have seen, from the summits, the other declivity and the abyss into which the joy of living would soon crash down. He closes his poem with the descent of Herakles, son of God, to sacrifice himself for humanity.

But the Greek names should not deceive us! Not a single one of them responds to our ideas of the school. All the myths are transfigured. Everything is new, the form as well as the idea. It is simply prodigious to have contemplated these Olympians of the Alps in new personages, and in the new scenes where Spitteler evokes them; once that is done it is no longer possible to consider that they could be otherwise than what he has created. That is the veritable fascination of genius and of beauty.

I am sure that France will be sensitive to that beauty some day. I even believe that the Latin peoples are better placed to taste it than the Germanic. For the work is eminently plastic. In it everything is seen through the eye of an artist, to the deepest thoughts. The whole thing lives, all in one body, in one individual form up to the very abstraction of spirit. It was the most sumptuous and the most fruitful work which the German genius has offered to us since the Faust. If I were thirty years younger, I would have given a few years of my life to translate some of the books. But hard pressed by age and my own works, I confine myself to the task of rendering my homage of respect and gratitude to him whom I admire above all the European poets of our age.

THE CLEANSER.

A free rendering, from the Bengali, of Satyendranath Datta's "Scavenger."

Why do they shun your touch, my friend,
    and call you unclean
Whom cleanliness follows at every step,
    making the earth and air sweet for our dwelling,
    and ever luring us back from return to the wild?
You help us, like a mother her child, into freshness,
    and uphold the truth, that disgust is never for man.
The holy stream of your ministry carries pollutions away
    and ever remains pure.
Once Lord Shiva had saved the world from a deluge of poison
    by taking it himself,
And you save it everyday from filth with the same divine sufferance.
Come friend, come my hero, give us courage
    to serve man, even while bearing the brand of infamy from him.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

THE KINGDOM OF ALLAH

By MAULVI ZIAUDDIN, *of Santiniketan.*

My object in writing this is to try to explain a few things in connection with Hindu-Muslim unity, especially with regard to those elements of discord which work in the sub-conscious mind of the Moslem part of the population of India, rising now and again to the surface and causing violent explosions.

We see that opposing forces meet in nature and help to make Nature's great harmony of life. The Hindus and the Mussalmans, however contradictory their characters may be, are surely destined to meet together in peace and harmony. This is the impending divine decree which shall certainly be fulfilled. All attempts that are made to create disorder and disunion are but abuse of power and liberty of action. These create anarchy in the Kingdom of Allah, who is love,—the very principle of harmony. All efforts that tend to disunite and create confusion are misdirected. Our motherland has suffered too long owing to this tension between her sons. Mahatma Gandhi will be a prophet, indeed, if he is able to bring all this to an end.

The problem of unity had been tried with some success in 1921 and 1922. The glow of temporary peace and union had led the leaders to base their surest hopes of the independence of the country on this union. But the recent disorders have grieved us all, to the point of utter disappointment. Now, when the result of our labours has been a failure, we are bound to revise our methods. It has become quite clear that no sort of unity is safe enough to be relied upon, which is not sanctioned by both the different religions. When it is religion itself that mainly separates, neither politics nor economics can bring us together. Bonds of union formed by these are bound to break under the slightest strain.

Religion has its own politics. I do not mean, of course, that one should give up creeds immediately. That is too much to expect; though, I believe, this is what we ultimately shall have to do. But what we must give up now is the false religious

sentiment that we have purposely created out of our antagonisms to one another. For some of us feel ourselves to be Mussalmans only so long as Hindus stand opposite,—the very next moment one may be anything else. A religion built upon such basis is really the only kind of religion that most of us possess to day. Its strength is always judged in comparison with the weakness of the other. We are almost obliged to condemn the religion of the other, else we seem to be deprived of the assurance of the supremacy of our own religion. To reform this perverted religious attitude is as important a work as the propaganda of Khaddar. The work of mass education with the main object of interpreting the religion of either party should be properly taken up before we can hope for real unity. It will be only the closer understanding and acquaintance, which comes of personal touch, that will make Hindus and Mussalmans appreciate each other and so unite them in bonds of love and mutual respect.

Mere tolerance is often represented as the means to the goal of our union. Toleration is all to the good, but it is negative; it does not really unite us. It keeps us at arms length and therefore we remain apart all the same. It implies, that we should do better to go our respective ways, self-concerned, carefully avoiding each other, lest we touch that sacred irritable point in us where the clash comes. But this attitude of aloofness is at best a kind of check, and ever a persistent strain on our minds. Such toleration is sure to break down in the end, in a violent outburst of reaction, as the result of the long accumulated energy of suppressed ill-will. Indeed, it is this very explosion, owing to past restraint, from which we are suffering to-day.

What we must have is a unity of a deeper nature than a mere attitude of non-interference in regard to delicate affairs,—a deeper unity that can come from fellow-feeling, sympathy, goodwill. These can only rise out of love and reverence for one another. No mere experiment in tolerance can be expected to produce them. It is only when we have recognised one another as brothers and sisters that we can unite. Our differences must be positively justified in our mind with all sincerity. There must be full play given to these differences in the respective developments of our personalities in our literature, religion,

philosophies, arts and sciences. This expression of our differences must be welcomed out of respect for our mutual freedom as brothers and sisters. Only then can we hope for any real unity.

Religious hatred.—it is no use denying this—still underlies the surface of our minds. It is this dangerous undercurrent which is running so strong and deep. The happenings of our own day have only succeeded in strengthening it. We, who are Mussalmans, have to deepen our belief in Allah, in order to overcome these under-currents and to counteract them. Hindus must do the same with their conception of God.

We must realise that the Kingdom of Allah is the Kingdom of Love, and not of hate; and that we are all his creatures, the objects of his mercy and pity. Religion in us must strengthen that belief. It must not quicken the baser passions of prejudice and hate. Above all we must not put out of sight the humane in us, and exist only as a mass of prejudice and superstition, selfishness and greed for power. Such moral senselessness makes it easy for us to sacrifice the interests—nay the life even—of our opponent, for the sake of our own religion. Hence all discord in the world.

The problem of Khilafat is really a serious one. The intimate connection of this with temporal power appears vital to our religion. I think they stand or fall together. The Caliph is the representative on earth of the Holy Prophet and Allah. Every Mussalman is a part and parcel of this Khilafat. In order to restore that Khilafat to the Caliph, if it ever happens to fall into the hands of his enemies, a Mussalman must fight to the last drop of his blood. That is what he lives for. There is no real Swaraj for a Mussalman without the independence of the Khilafat. But, as he prefers Indian Swaraj to British rule. and also feels it to be a political necessity, he may try, on that ground, for Indian Swaraj and help the Hindus. Or if he thinks, as he really does, that Swaraj will indirectly help the Khilafat constitution and the Muslim countries on the whole, he may strive for it, having that ulterior motive in view. But Indian *Swaraj* in itself will be no victory for Islam. That will not give the Holy Quran any exclusive command over India.

We Mussalmans have to compromise and accommodate. Hindus must do likewise, and allow for this permanent fact of the Caliph in Islam. It has to be combined with the idea of Indian *Swaraj* and shown to be capable of such a combination.

Indian *Swaraj* will be of no permanence, if there is no deeper appreciation of each other, with mutual love and respect. The unity of culture which constitutes the strongest bond between the communities, can only be possible, when, along with the political necessity of Indian *Swaraj*, the Mussalmans also feel religiously one with India. That will only be attained when we have learnt how to love all Hindus as our fellow-countrymen, belonging to the same Motherland. Allah made no difference between man and man. He made all men after his own image. But perpetual differences have arisen amongst them owing to religious misunderstandings due to prejudice.

The following passages may be quoted, in support of my contention, from the Holy Quran :

For everyone of you did we appoint a law and a way. And if Allah had wished, he would have made of you a single people; but that he might try you in what he gave you. Therefore strive with one another to hasten to virtuous deeds. To Allah is the return of all you : so he will let you know that in which you disagreed.

*

O men, surely we have created you from a male and female, and made nations and families, that you may know one another. Surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one most pious among you. Allah is knowing and aware.

CREATION OR DESTRUCTION?

By KSHIROD-CHANDRA SEN.

Which precedes the other, creation or destruction,—first in the order of time or succession, and next in the order of value?

The man of uninstructed, undisciplined mind, enjoying traditionary reverence as the man of common sense, has no hesitation in answering the question, in both its parts, in favour of the former. He has an instinctive predilection for *creation*, and accords it subconscious precedence, first in the order of value, and then derivatively in the order of time. Creation out of nothing seems more natural to him than creation out of something; and destruction presupposes creation; for it assumes something in existence, and existence is impossible without the priority of creation. To him the process of destruction means diminishing volume, and complete destruction, disappearance of volume. He has no idea of conservation, which is a high-wrought product of advanced scientific cerebration.

He feels fully justified in his own eyes in making his answer. He probably further thinks that not to make an answer is tantamount to showing an indirect irreverence to *creation,* its *creator,* and his *creative* purpose. He is guided by instinct, not by a *priori reasoning*. As to *a posteriori* thinking, his mind is but a lumber room for the accumulation of unpolarised fragments of experience, which he has neither the power nor the desire to arrange for the purposes of syllogistic exploitation.

It is difficult to put into a nutshell the answer of the philosopher to these cardinal questions. For, there are two classes of philosophers, one of which is still immersed in poetry up to the neck, with a shower bath of science overhead.

This science deals with minute fractions of experience, subjecting them to joint and several examination, and co-ordinating numbers of them so as to build up generalisations of minor magnitude, which sometimes exact great admiration for their value in the practical life of man. The original aspiration of

philosophy to discover a complete world-view, a thing by itself, is now all but lost in the endeavour of science to build up a whole view of the world by bringing its fragments together and arranging them in such order as may enable the aggregate to be packed into the smallest space, and so appear as complete from its own point of vantage, in the endeavour to visualize the *absolute,* in the law and order of the reign of *relativity*.

The poet, on the other hand, has a free, corruscating mind, that is, a mind, seemingly in the wild state of nature, but clarified or corrupted, according to the type to which he belongs, by his imagination co-operating with the fragrance, or the stench of experience, into a blinding effulgence or melancholy gloom,—as the case may be,—with the superadded faculty of visualizing these experiences for the benefit of his neighbours. I shall say nothing of the second type of poet, for his views may sound offensively heretical. As regards the first, he flatly refuses to permit *Truth* to part company pith *Beauty,* even for a twinkle, and compels it to behave like a hen-pecked husband throughout the livelong day. He jumps forward to answer the question, in both its aspects, with an enthusiastic lack of circumspection. Creation is all in all to him—the creation of jealous *Beauty* for the cajolement and caressing of *Truth,* carried to excess of love, oppressive in its sweetness. Creation comes first in the order of time, and runs through the middle to the end of it, standing first to the order of values throughout. Nothing that is not *creative* has any value for him; and nothing is creative which is not beautiful. He simply ignores destruction.

To the genuine philosopher, who, transcending the limitations of poetry and science, looks on it as an undivided whole, as an organism with a life of its own apart from the lives of its organs, the world presents itself, not as a thing, but as a process of incessant, interminable change, which he believes to be streaming in a regular, uniform, invariable sequence,—intelligible, but not always understood. For him the world is not the product of a single all-comprehensive creative fiat, or of a limited plurality of fiats, extending over six-sevenths of a week, but an infinite series of infinite changes, above the limitations of beginning and end. The change at each step implies

destruction as well as construction, which taken together constitute the progressive life of the world, changeful, yet carrying marks of identity. The constructive part of the change is coming increasingly to appropriate the name of *creation*, while the destructive part is coming to be ignored, deliberately or unconsciously. Creation, which originally meant a sudden emergence out of vacuity is now becoming, by the subtle power of *time*, an etherial combination of vacuity and solid matter.

The philosopher is getting shy of the orthodox view of the world. For common sense, he is trying to substitute culture which, at bottom more destructive than constructive in character, disparages and destroys the achievements of common sense, while smugly posing as a creative power exploring the universe and discovering in secrets. Man craves to see Truth in *puris naturalibus*, but Truth is getting shy. He refuses to be exposed to view in complete nudity, lest we should be scandalised and take it as an outrage upon our modesty. This shyness of Truth is probably partly due to his conjugal relations with Beauty, who never allows him to come out of doors by himself, for which fact we are asked to be grateful to the magic of poetry.

Science, untouched by philosophy, is more straightforward. To it the world is abysmal at the bottom, and nebulous at the top. The middle region is the one that counts. It grapples with *where* irrespective of *whence* and *whither*. It abhors destruction, which means something passing into nothing. It loathes creation, which means nothing grown into something. It is guided by the law of conservation, for matter as well as for energy. It believes in the intercommunion between potentiality and actuality. It disbelieves any covenant or pact between *nothing* and *something*. The conservation of matter is left in the charge of Chemistry; that of energy in the province of Physics. Science hates ambiguity and camouflage, so far as it goes; but it does not go far towards the satisfaction of the intellectual hunger of human nature.

Pseudo-science is more pretentious. It is of two kinds: impossible science, such as the science of Ethics; and science in childhood, such as Anthropology. But it is difficult to distinguish between them. A science in childhood may appear

with an old head placed on young shoulders, as is the case with evolutionary Biology, and behave like a veteran military general, creating instincts and automatic movements in amateur conscripts by the force of repeated drilling. It is marvellous to contemplate the ultra-Napoleonic influence which this young prodigy of science has achieved, in the natural, social, and political world, with its bold sallies. Wherever there is life, the highest or the lowest, existing in the spirit or in the flesh, there promenades young Biology with imperial gait, robed in natural-selection, survival-of-the-fittest, and other awe-inspiring products of the sartorial art.

It now remains to examine what view Literature takes of the significance of *creation* and *destruction,* and of the problem of precedence between them. Literature has made great analytic advances during the last half a century. Undeveloped literature was general in character. It dealt with history, science, romance, drama, poetry and philosophy in lump. It was not aware of their separate existence. They have now ramified in diverse ways, each in its own appropriate direction. To make my point more clear, I may refer to the case of the animal world. The undifferentiated animalculae have no separate senses for seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting, but only one homogeneous sense-organisation, which serves them, though imperfectly, for all purposes. With the progress of life the senses have differentiated, and have become more efficient. The development of literature has pressed forward by similar processes of differentiation and integration.

Literature still has a life of its own, apart from the lives of the organs or heterogenous members which have developed out of it. This life of literature is in a perplexed, precarious, state at present. It is a fugitive, living in the refuge of magazines and periodicals, and is somewhat aggressive and intrusive in the name of freedom. Prosody is the weaver that covers its shame. It is continually transgressing its legitimate limits, and making raids into the specialised branches.

General literature, as thus defined, or rather indicated, makes a punch-like mixture with the poetic, the philosophic the scientific and the common-sense view of the origin, character

and quality of *creation* and *destruction*. We have not yet organised a science of Teleology. When the pragmatic theory of life has been further developed it will be possible to find a separate compartment for Teleology. Under present circumstances it has no choice between muteness and noisiness. It has to sing, dance, monologise and whistle in the common room, unmindful of the atmosphere of annoyance which it creates.

I may mention here the astounding fact that Teleology, though opposed to naturalism, is secretly negotiating with Darwinism an *entente cordiale* for the aggrandisement of western civilisation. Darwin himself had been unconsciously drawn into the trap laid by Teleology when he baptised his *magnum opus* as "The origin of species and survival of the *favoured* races." Herbert Spencer solemnly warned him of the danger to which "the origin of species" was exposed by coalescence with the "survival of the *favoured* races", with the result that "the survival of the fittest" was substituted. Teleology was for the moment being driven back from the salient occupied by it. But when Darwinism was brought to bear upon the Cause of the ascendancy of Western Civilisation, Teleology made a furtive, peaceful penetration and took a definite position in the theory of natural-selection; and, far from being dislodged by subsequent operations, it is making its position increasingly secure in the super-organic branch of evolution,—I mean, in the evolution of society. The *"favoured races"* have reappeared in science in the shape of the *"Nordic Aryans"*. This means, in plain words, that the creative activity of the Christian God, the father of all, was motivated by the final ascendancy of the Nordic race in the world of Humanity. And this desecration of Darwinism and of Divine purpose alike, is passing for science to-day!

General literature uses the words *creation* and *creative*, *destruction* and *destructive*, promiscuously and ambiguously. Creation may mean creation out of nothing; creation by fiat, singular or plural; creation by evolution or in driblets; or mere change of form, chemical or mechanical. The general trend is to regard creation and destruction as variations in form,—useful or beautiful variations being given the appellation of creation, and hurtful or ugly ones being consigned to the dust-bin of

destruction. This opens a vast field for controversy. The conflict between the useful and the beautiful has to be grappled with in the first instance. No general *referendum* can decide the issue. The world is divided antithetically into an infinite number of correlated parts, and what is useful to the original part is by necessity hurtful to the counterpart. What is creative for the West is destructive for the East. What is creative for Germany is destructive for France. As to beauty, the determining factor is still more subjective. Dr. Tagore was recently annoyed by the prospect of a beautiful lagoon at Canton being converted into a campus. Here, in the first place, there was the conflict between beauty and utility to be taken into account; and in the second, there was the subjective difference of tastes to be tackled. Further, what is beautiful to-day may be hurtful to-morrow, and conversely.

Long- and short-run judgments regarding values are bound to differ, and even to come into mutual conflict, in a world where life is a process of incessant change affecting the emotions of diversely constituted, and still more diversely cultivated, minds. Creation and destruction almost seem to be convertible terms, the convertibility depending more upon subjective than upon objective factors. Every creation implies a destruction. To the thirsty, the variation from a mechanical mixture of oxygen and hydrogen to a chemical combination,—that is, their conversion into water,—is a creative act. To the baloonist, wanting hydrogen, it is destructive. We are shocked by the killing of a goat in our presence, and in two hours' time, when the resulting dishes are placed on the table, we change our opinion. The tailor mercilessly works with the scissors upon fine silk to-day and to-morrow produces an admirable blouse. The Editor of a periodical, pressed by limitations of space, takes in hand his redactorial sword, and runs amok amongst the contributions of youthful writers, without awareness how and where the sword-cuts tell, though nothing but malice can ascribe to him anything short of *creative* purpose!

Judgment about the creative value of the world-famed mechanical revolution, known as the French revolution, is at length getting shy after a triumphant procession lasting over a

century and a half. It has not brought the millenium which was expected from it. On the contrary, it has created over-population, pauperism, expatriation, slavery and moral debauchery. We feel shocked by the annihilation of the Red Indian races, and at the same time heartily admire the creation of the resplendent civilisation of America, which is one of its outstanding achievements. Destructive criticism is abominable But what is philosophy to-day? Nine-tenths of it is divided into the destruction of previous speculation, and the remaining one-tenth is a tottering structure, which leaks before the completion report is submitted. "Culture is the criticism of life", says Mathew Arnold—whatever is useful or beautiful in life is the product of destructive criticism. The accumulation of errors in the augean stable of the world loudly calls for a Hercules to make it habitable. The very bowels of the earth have been hammered and *hara-kiried* for the creation and development of western civilization,—into hollows which may one day serve as its place of burial.

Siva, the greatest god of the Hindu Trinity, is the destroyer. The creation of democracy implies the destruction of monarchy; —the grand edifice of political freedom in the West has been built upon the skulls of kings and monarchs. The sword and the guillotine have a creative value higher than that of the ploughshare. The creation of autonomy in India implies the destruction of British domination. The reformation in Christendom meant the destruction of Popedom. Socialism comes in, and individualism goes out. The contemplative life owes its spiritual beauty to the destruction of moral activity. Culture involves the strangulation of common sense. The abolition of negro slavery was rendered possible by the prospect of enslaving free white men and women in a different way. Christian missionaries have failed among the high caste Hindus because the difficulties of the destructive portion of the work proved insurmountable. Among the aborigines of Europe and Asia the monks and missionaries have been eminently creative, because the destructive preliminary work encountered no difficulty.

Natural selection is an euphemism for natural rejection.

Nature improves the race by destroying it. Social co-operation is rendered possible by social conflict and competition. Love is often destructive. Hate is frequently creative. Western civilisation has obtained ascendancy in the world chiefly by the creative power of hate. A loves C in order to hate B with efficiency. The hate precedes the love. Hate is creative, because it creates love. This is the secret of the origin of society, and also of its progress. Friendship between individuals and alliance between nations are best explained by this theory of love and hate.

These views regarding destruction and creation have nothing to do with Cynicism, and if some of them look paradoxical there is no helping it. The truth is, man has been endeavouring for ages to distinguish between destruction and creation, hate and love, to appraise their values, and to decide the question of precedence, without advancing an inch towards the solution. It is prejudice, inherited and acquired, that creates aversion to destruction, or longing for creation. The theory of *Maya* remains unshaken by all the multitudinous stirrings for mastering the secrets of the world. Nature governs the universe very much on the principles on which India is governed by the State of Britain. She consults man, receives his opinion in the form of reports, and then pigeon-holes them; while events majestically march through history in disciplined disorder, enthused by discordant symphonies sung by infernal cherubim from some celestial pandemonium.

ANCIENT INDIAN EDUCATION FROM THE EPICS

By Dr. Radha-kumud Mukherji.

The purely educational evidence of the Epics is very meagre in comparison with the sizes of the works or the vast quantity of sociological data they furnish. This is, of course due to the interest of the two Epics lying mainly in the realm of action and not in that of thought. The predominant part in their history is taken by the military and ruling caste. The bulk of the intellectual life of the country centred in the hermitages and homes of Rishis and Brahmins which do not receive notice in the Epics except when they are connected with the course of the story.

Nevertheless, we can wring out of even such unpromising sources interesting information bearing upon matters educational. There are some general discourses bearing on duties of the first *ásrama* of life, the life of studentship. Secondly, there are accounts of some ideal students and schools or hermitages, the centres of learning in those days. Thirdly, there are accounts given of the education that was imparted to the princes or the children of the Kshatriya caste who were meant for the military and political career.

The first period of life is that of preparation through education. But this means that we must know what it is a preparation for. The preparatory processes, the contents, and methods of education, thus varied with the ultimate ends in view. The education of the Brahmin was such as would prepare him for the duties and vocations laid down as legitimate for him Similarly, the education of the Kshatriya, the Vaisya, and the Sudra, too, were such as could fit each for his respective career in life. All education was thus, in a sense, vocational or practical.

The duties of the several castes which thus determine the kind of training suitable for them are laid down in some passages of the Mahabharata. Thus [XII, 60] :

Self-control is the first duty of the Brahmanas. Study of the Vedas and patient practice of austerities are also their other duties. By practising these two, all their acts are done.

If while engaged in the observance of his own duties, without doing any unlawful act, riches come to a peaceful Brahmana endowed with knowledge, he should then marry and beget offspring and should also practise charity and perform sacrifices He should also share the enjoyment of this wealth with the worthy.

But by Vedic study alone will a Brahmana's duties be done. Whether he does anything else or not, he will be regarded as a true Brahmana, the friend of the universe.*

Thus practically the life of a Brahmin is the life of study whereby he becomes the custodian of the nation's culture to the promotion of which he has to consecrate his whole life.

Regarding the duties of the Kshatriya it is laid down that :

He should give but not beg; should himself celebrate sacrifices but not officiate as a priest in the sacrifices of others; should never teach the Veda but study the same with a Brahmana teacher; should protect his people, being always ready to kill robbers and show his mettle in battle, for there is no higher duty of a Kshatriya than checking the wicked. While gifts, study, and sacrifices bring him prosperity the Kshatriya who wishes for spiritual merit can realise it only by doing his duties as a warrior. The proper duty of a king is to defend his people and keep them to their duties and when that is done, it does not matter if he does anything else or not. The best of kings is distinguished by three attributes, viz., performance of sacrifices, knowledge of the Vedas, and victory in wars.

Regarding the Vaisya he should make gifts, study the Vedas, perform sacrifices and acquire wealth by fair means.

It is thus evident that while study is binding upon all belonging to the three twice-born castes (the majority of the population), a life of learning or an intellectual career is not prescribed for all. The Kshatriya is destined for the political and the Vaisya for the economic career. In Adam Smith's phraseology, the former is for 'defence' and the latter for 'opulence.'

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*M. N. Dutt's translation is adopted for the Mahabharata passages throughout.

The status of the Sudra in this state of society has been much misunderstood. It would be irrelevant to our present purpose to go minutely into the question. We are only concerned with its educational or cultural aspects, which are very well indicated in some passages of the Mahabharata. It may be recalled that much of the intellectual life and culture of the community centred round the sacrifice which had thus a very great educative influence. The privilege of performing certain sacrifices was not denied to the Sudra. Of course these sacrifices were of a kind other than the strictly Vedic sacrifices for which the higher castes alone were eligible and are called *Pakayajnas*. But the Mahabharata is very particular in pointing out the highest of all sacrifices is open to all, including the Sudra. That sacrifice is devotion, *Sraddha-yajna*,—a sacrifice performed by the mind. "Even gods do not disdain to share the offerings of sacrifices of Sudras when performed in such spirit."

Having now roughly indicated the legitimate careers marked out for the four castes for which they must prepare in the period of their education, we proceed to the kind and methods of education prescribed for the members of the different castes to qualify them for their respective careers or callings in life.

Regarding the education of Brahmins it is indicated in several passages which summarise the duties and rules relating to the first *ásrama* or stage of life and applicable to the three twice-born classes on the lines laid down in the Dharma Sutras.

Of the four modes of life, to live in the house of the preceptor is the first. In this mode of life one should have his soul cleansed by purity of conduct, by Vedic rites, by restraints, vows and humility. He should adore the morning and evening twilights, the sun, his own consecrated hearth and the gods. He should shake off procrastination and idleness. He should purify his soul by studying the Vedas and by attending to his preceptor's instructions. He should perform his ablutions thrice. He should lead a life of celebacy; attend to his consecrated hearth, daily go out for alms and give ungrudgingly to his preceptor the whole of what is got in alms. Carrying out willingly the behests of his preceptor, he should be ready to receive such Vedic instruction as his preceptor may give him as a favour. (XII, 191).

The following passages (XII, 242) further elaborate the rules of studentship :

While living in the preceptor's house, the Brahmacharin should seek bed after the preceptor has gone to his bed and rise therefrom before the preceptor rises from his. He should do all such acts again as a disciple or menial servant should do. Doing these he should humbly stand by his preceptor.

Having performed all acts he should study, sitting at the feet of his preceptor with anxious desire to learn. He should always behave with simplicity, avoid evil speech and take lessons only when his preceptor asks him to attend.

Having thus spent a fourth part of his life in the study of the Vedas and observance of vows and fasts and having piven the preceptor his fee, the disciple should, according to the ordinance, take his leave and return home for becoming a house-holder.

Another passage (XII, 66) points out the "study of the Vedas every day, forgiveness, worship of preceptors and services rendered to one's own teacher" as securing the attainment of the object of *brahmacharya*.

The following passage [V, 44] throws further light on the system of studentship and the sacred relations obtaining between the teacher and the taught :

The father and the mother only create the body ; but the state derived from the instructions of the preceptor is sacred, undecaying, and immortal.

The preceptor is to be regarded as father and mother and must not be sinned against.

A disciple should everyday pay respects to his preceptor and engage in study with a pure mind and concentrated attention. He should never feel annoyed or angry (at the humble or hard services he is called upon to perform at his preceptor's house). This is the first step of studentship.

He who acquires learning and maintains himself by the proceeds of his begging in the morning and evening and not by depending upon the preceptor's means—such a dutiful student completes the first step of studentship.

The second step of studentship is the performance of acts desired by the preceptor at all costs even to the last penny, and

by all means—body, mind, and speech,—even unto the sacrifice of life itself.

The third step towards the fulfilment of studentship consists in the proper realisation by the pupil of the benefits his preceptor confers on him by imparting to him the knowledge which annihilates pain and brings on bliss, the peace that passeth all understanding, so that in exaltation of heart he may thus think always of his preceptor. 'By him have I been so developed.'

The fourth and last step of studentship consists in the pupil not leaving the preceptor's home without first acknowledging, by suitable presents, the debt he owes to his preceptor for his gift of knowledge. The pupil must make his presents in a spirit of humility and self-effacement, not pluming himself on making a gift to his teacher or even speaking about it, and whatever wealth the pupil acquires must thus be offered to his teacher, without reservation.

These four steps of studentship are acquired (*a*) in course of time, *i.e.*, by the natural growth of one's mental powers, (*b*) by contact with the preceptor, (*c*) by the pupil's own endeavours or mental capacity, and (*d*) by discussion with fellow-pupils. Thus the four factors of education are a suitable period of time, individual earnestness and capacity, the guidance of the teacher and the stimulus of associates in study.

The eligibility for studentship is strictly laid down. The teaching of the Vedas must not be imparted to one who has not formally become a disciple, who has not observed vows or who is of impure soul. No knowledge should be imparted to one whose character is not previously known. As pure gold is tested by heating, cutting, and rubbing so should disciples be examined with reference to their birth and qualities. There is in addition the very remarkable dictum that persons of *all the four castes* are competent to listen to discourses on Vedas or Vedic recitations [XII, 327].

Lastly, the pedagogic principle is laid down that the studies prescribed should be according to capacity, for one's knowledge is always proportionate to his understanding and diligence in study [XII, 327].

Both the general course of the narrative and the episodes or stories of the Mahabharata introduce us to ideal students, teachers, schools, and hermitages and other centres of learning.

Takshasila was a noted centre of learning. The story is told of one of its teachers named Dhaumya who had three disciples named Upamanyu, Aruni and Veda. Aruni, hailed from Panchala and was an ideal student in respect of devotion to his teacher under whose orders, in order to stop a leakage in the water course in his field, Aruni, finding every other means unavailing, threw his own body into the breach.

In the story of Kacha and Devayani, Kacha gives the following glimpse into his student life: "Carrying the burden of sacrificial wood, *kusa* grass and fuel I was coming towards the hermitage and feeling tired sat for rest under the shade of the banyan tree along with my companions, the kine under my charge," [1-76, 35, 36]. One of the traditional duties of the student was to tend his preceptor's cattle, and collect wood for fire and sacrifice and he was thereby brought into intimate touch with Nature and subjected to her own peculiar educational processes working through "silent sympathy," as Wordsworth puts it. The outdoor life and fellowship with the lower animals had also their own advantages for the student.

The story of Yavakrita [III, 135] emphasises the indispensable need of a teacher in the acquisition of knowledge which the Upanishads also insist upon. In the story, Yavakrita engaged in the severest asceticism for obtaining the knowledge of the Vedas, because he thought that study under a teacher would require a long time for the purpose. Indra admonished him saying: 'The way you have adopted is not the proper way. Go and learn the Vedas from the preceptor.' Finding his advice still going unheeded he conveyed to Yavakrita a sensible image of his folly by attempting the impossible feat of bridging the river Ganga by means of his hands.

The story of Arstisena illustrates the opposite principle. It shows how in spite of his long continued residence at his preceptor's house and regular instruction day by day he could not master any branch of learning or the Vedas. It was only

after his practice of austere penances that he achieved success [IX, 40].

The Mahabharata tells us of typical hermitages where pupils from distant parts gathered for instruction round some far-famed teacher.

The most important of such hermitages was that of the *Naimisa* forest which was like a University. The presiding personality of the place was Saunaka to whom was applied the designation of *Kulapati* sometimes defined as the preceptor of 10,000 disciples. Saunaka attracted to Naimisa a vast concourse of learned men by his performance of a twelve years' sacrifice of which the most essential *anga* or accompaniment was the discourses and disputations of learned men on religious, philosophical, and scientific topics.

The wide range and variety of their studies are also indicated. There were specialists in every branch of learning cultivated in that age: in each of the four Vedas; in sacrificial literature and art; in Kalpa-Sutras; in the art of reciting the Sanhitas, in Ortheopy generally and in *Siksha* (phonetics, *Chhanda* (metrics.), *Sabda, Vyakarana,* and *Nirukta.* There were the philosophers well versed in *Atma-Vijnana* (Science of the Absolute), in *Brahmopasana* (worship of Brahma), in *Mokshadharma* (the way to salvation) and in *Lokayata Vaisesika.* There were Logicians knowing the principles of *Nyaya,* and of Dialectics (the art of establishing propositions, solving doubts and ascertaining conclusions). There were also specialists in the physical sciences and arts, for example experts in the art of constructing sacrificial altars of various dimensions and shapes (on the basis of a knowledge of solid Geometry); those who had knowledge of the properties of matter (*dravyaguna*); of physical processes and their results, of causes and their effects; and zoologists having a special knowledge of monkeys and birds. It was thus a forest University where the study of every branch of learning known and developed in those days was cultivated.

Among other hermitages noticed by the Mahabharata may be mentioned those of Vasishtha and Vishvamitra [IX, 42] and that in the forest of Kamyaka on the banks of the Sarasvati [III, 183]. But a hermitage near Kuruksetra [IX, 54] deserves

special notice for the interesting fact recorded that it produced two noted women hermits. There ' leading from youth the vow of *Brahmacharyá* a Brahmin maiden was crowned with ascetic success'' and ultimately acquiring yogic powers she became a *tapas-siddha*, while another lady, the daughter not of a Brahmin but of a Kshatriya, a child not of poverty but of affluence, the daughter of a king, Sandilya by name, came to live there the life of celibacy and attained spiritual pre-emience.

The hermitage of Vyasa was a renowned seat of learning. There ''Vyasa taught the Vedas to his disciples. Those disciples were the highly blessed Sumanta, Vaisampayana, Jaimini of great wisdom and Paila of great ascetic merit.'' They were afterwards joined by Suka, the famous son of Vyasa [XII, 328].

Along with the stationary seats of learning in these sylvan retreats another great educative influence in the country was the occasional concourse of learned men gathered together at the courts and places of kings by the sessions of sacrifices they used to celebrate with due pomp and liberality. The Upanishads, as is well known, are full of pictures of such learned congregations which in ancient India played the principal part in the advancement and diffusion of knowledge. As may be expected, the Mahabharata does not fail to notice this important type of educational agencies which constitute such a characteristic feature in the history of Indian pedagogic theory and practice, organisation and achievement.

The whole of the Mahabharata was recited from day by day by Vaisampayana at the Sacrifice of Janamejaya, son of Pariksit, which was attended by thousands of learned Brahmins. Again, it was at the sacrifice of Saunaka at Naimisaranya that the Mahabharata was repeated by Ugrasrava Sauti. Thus the celebration of these royal sacrifices was the principal agency for the promulgation and popularisation of original literary works of national interest and importance.

The Upanishads emphasise the other feature of these learned gatherings, *viz.*, that they provided the arena where scholars seeking to establish their intellectual position entered the list in tournaments of debate. This feature

is also noticed by the Mahabharata [III, 132-134] where it is stated how learned Brahmins were flocking to the sacrifice of Janaka "for the purpose of listening to controversies" and the recitation of the Vedas. Thither came Ashtavakra eager to assert and establish his intellectual primacy but the entrance to the Congress was barred by the gate-keeper who under orders from the learned chief, Vandi, was to admit only 'old and learned Brahmins'. Ashtavakra had thus first to convince the gate-keeper of his eligibility for membership of that learned assembly and addressed him as follows : "O gate-keeper, you will to-day see me engaged in a controversial fight with all the learned men and get the better of Vandi himself in arguments." In the end Ashtavakra came out victorious, with his supremacy acknowledged by the whole assembly.

We now come to the education of the Kshatriya. Both law and legend are at one in making studentship the first stage in the life of every member of the three twice-born classes. But as has been already stated, the course of studies may be naturally assumed not to have been uniform for all the classes but determined by the ultimate ends and careers prescribed for each class. This *a priori* assumption seems to be borne out by the evidence of the Epics as a whole, though there are some passages in that evidence liable to give a contrary impression.

It is necessary at the outset to recall how the position is defined by the law-givers. The three occupations common to all the twice-born classes as stated therein are 'studying, sacrificing, and giving.' To these three occupations would be added, as special to the Brahmin, 'teaching, performing sacrifices for others, and receiving gifts,' and, as special to the Kshatriya, 'defence or protection of his people.' It is also to be noted that such study as was enjoined for the Kshatriya might make him sufficiently proficient in the Veda to be able to teach even a Brahmin student 'who should not go without education for failure of a Brahmin teacher'. Thus normally the Kshatriya was only to study, and the Brahmin to study as also to teach and perform sacrifices for others.

Let us now consider the education of the princes. The Pandus are described as "having studied *all* the Vedas and the

various Sastras or treatises on duty etc.," [I, 1, 122]. Dhritarashtra, Pandu and Vidura "brought up from their very birth by Bhisma as if they were his own sons" are described as "being purified by the ceremonies of their order, disciplined by study and the vows and practices of studentship, and emerging into manhood skilled in athletics, in the use of arms, the bow, the club, the sword and shield, in the driving of elephants; and in "studies", such as *Nitisastra* (polity), *Itihasa* and *Purana* and the truths of the Vedas and Vedangas; and are of fixed determination in all their undertakings."

Bhísma, as the guardian of the Pándu and Kuru princes committed to his care, appoints as their preceptor Drona "learned in all the Vedas," to teach them the science of arms." "Though he gave equal instruction to all, yet Arjuna became the foremost of all in agility and skill." "Arjuna took a great deal of care in worshipping the preceptor; had great devotion to his study of the science of arms. Therefore he became a great favourite of Drona." "He practised with his bow (aiming at unseen targets) even in the night." Pleased with him Drona then taught him "the art of fighting on horseback, on the elephant, on the car and on foot. He taught him the use of the club, the sword, the lance, the spear and the dart, and many other weapons, as well as how to fight with superior numbers." As regards his other pupils, Duryodhana and Bhíma specialised in the art of club-fighting, Nakula and Sahadeva in sword-fighting, Yudhisthira as a 'car-warrior', while Aswathámá excelled in the use of all arms.

The same kind of military training was also the portion of the next generation of princes. "That valiant *boy,* Abhimanyu (son of Arjuna) became equal to his father in counteracting the weapons hurled at him, in great lightness of hand, in fleetness of motion forward and backward and in traversing and wheeling." He "learnt from Arjuna the science of arms with its four branches and ten divisions . . . . and he also became learned in the Vedas." After having studied the Vedas those princes (sons of Draupadí) of excellent behaviour and vows learnt from Arjuna the use of all the weapons." [I, 223].

That the religious or Vedic knowledge which these princes

were expected to acquire was a mere smattering will be evident from the fact that in the great war we find among the active combatants a good many young knights. One of the foremost of these was Abhimanyu who is represented as only sixteen years old.

The conclusion to which this points is very well put by Hopkins: "How are we to interpret this? The science of arms required years of patient study. Is it conceivable that a boy otherwise occupied in physical training should by the age of sixteen be master of the special skill that gave him power on the battle field and at the same time have found time to commit to memory even one Vedic collection? It is clear that the law is later than the epic on this point; and even there such knowledge is only to be assumed as desirable for the warrior in general. The active young knight and busy trader must have performed their duties toward the Veda in a very perfunctory way, if at all."

In the *Rámáyana*. [I, 80, 27 ff.] the list of subjects the King is expected to study includes Dhanurveda, Nitisástra and the lore (*siksá*) of elephants and cars, besides the art of painting (*álekhya*), writing (*lekhya*), jumping (*langhana*) and swimming (*plávana*). In another passage we have mention of writing and numbers [*ib*. 80, 4] of fine arts (*gandharva vidyá*), logic (*nyáya*), and polity (*nítisástra*).

The entire military science and art of the age seem to have been comprehended under the generic term *Dhanurveda*, the *dhanu* or bow being regarded as the type or symbol of all weapons or methods of warfare and is mentioned in different references as conveying different kinds of military knowledge or accomplishments. The *rathasiksa* or skill with the car became a part of the Dhanurveda. Therein was also taught the skill in the use of armour so as to make it invulnerable.

According to Hopkins, "the ultimate expansion of the theory of weapons resulted in the theory of war, and this was expanded again into a theory of polity; and we thus have on the one side our modern Nítisastra or system of royal polity, and on the other the practical instruction in the use of arms or the science of weapons."

NOTES AND COMMENTS

By Rabindranath Tagore.

[*From notes taken in South America of a discourse in response to a request to the Poet to speak on Christmas morning just as he would have spoken, had he been at Santiniketan Asram, on the significance of the Christmas Anniversary.*]

When you ask what idea it is that Christmas represents to me, it is as though you had suddenly brought out into the glare of the midday sun a man who for a long time had been living in a cave. Inside the cave, he had to focus his eyes to obtain all the light he could get, so that he might live his restricted life in that dark region. But outside the cave, where the perspective is widely different, where the range of vision is immense, everything appears vague and distant unless the eyesight has sufficient pliancy to adjust itself to the changed condition of its environment.

I have been living in a world of daily needs and diversions, occupied with trivialities of all kinds, which mostly concerned myself and the few other individuals who came in my way. With these scanty materials, I have had to build my watch tower for a narrow world, where a wide outlook was of no use to me. In fact it would have distracted me, and my companions also, if I had kept the mind which, like the wings of a bird that is caged, was always ready to deal with a reality that went far beyond the limits of an insulated existence.

Therefore in such circumstances, when the mind is suddenly set free in the heart of a great subject, we are apt to grope round the external aspect and begin with a survey of historical facts.

But I must confess at once, that I do not know the historical details of Jesus Christ's life, or of his age and environment. Nor have I studied those points about his biography, upon which scholars have thrown doubts. Not only can I not deal with such a subject, but I have a temperament which ignores such things as of comparative unimportance for the special purpose that I have in view. Therefore I have to deal with my own personal experience as the background for the idea which this great day contains.

But the background of one's personal life often remains obscured, just as a misty sky does not offer a perfect view of the morning world. You know how in our own Asram at Santiniketan, we celebrate our Christmas Day, and how I offer my reverence to the personality that has to be remembered on that occasion. It is quite easy for me to do it there. It does not require much strain to switch off my mentality from our life of ordinary daily work to a region of ideals which belong to all time. We lack there that superfluous bulk of things, which exerts such an immense gravitational pull in this country. Comparatively speaking, the great masses in India still possess the simple mind and spontaneous faith that are necessary for maintaining the perfect translucence of the spiritual atmosphere. But in this country, the suggestion of the Infinite is smothered every day with the pride of wealth, the pursuit of power, and the perpetual dissipation of the spirit's inner resources, for the sake of that overwhelming outward display which is considered to be civilisation.

However, I am glad that you have asked me to talk on this day; for, because of this claim of yours, you help me to come out of my surroundings, out of the thick fog which hides the world of light from my vision.

A man may be born in a prison house and never know that it is a prison. Instead of a punishment which is too obvious, he may have his every comfort provided for him, and costly furniture and surroundings that fill his mind with pride; but he

may still be deprived of his happiness. What is this happiness? It is freedom.

The degree of this freedom is measured according to our realisation of the infinite in the outer world, or in the inner life. In a narrow room we may have as much space as is necessary for living and for the exercise of our muscles; the food may be more than sufficient, it may even be sumptuous and luxurious; yet our inborn craving for what we may call the more, the unattained, the infinite, remains unsatisfied. We are deprived of that Infinite, which is freedom of space in the outer world, and variety in the world of our experience. We are therefore deprived of the happiness which can only be had through meeting the Infinite in the world of sense.

But a more profoundly intimate perception of the Infinite lies in that intensity of our consciousness, which we can only attain when we realise some ideal of perfection. Our Upanishads have said that "in the Infinite is our happiness", that "happiness can never be in things that are small and finite". When we have made an exact adjustment of ourselves with the world of finitude, we find it is not enough for us as human beings, though it may be enough for the animals. We, in our human nature, have a hunger for truth which is immense, for something a great deal more than what we need immediately for the purposes of life. Men all through their history have been struggling to realise this truth according to the unfolding of their idea of the Infinite, and have been gradually changing their methods and planes of existence, constantly meeting failures, but never owning final defeat.

We find the animals have their evolution along the line of the race. They have their individual life which ends with their death. But even in them there is a touch of the Infinite which urges them to outlive their own life in the life of the race, accepting sufferings and sacrifice for its sake. The spirit of sacrifice in the parents is this touch of the Infinite,—the motive power which makes the race-life possible, which helps to

develop those faculties in them that will enable their descendants to find better opportunity for food and shelter.

The tree has in it the same ideal, to sacrifice itself for its progeny; but, as far as we can judge from outside, there is not in it that active mind which consciously works to this end. It is fixed to the soil, and there it has what appears to us an unconscious habit that struggles to perpetuate its existence through its progeny. But the animals, because they are not rooted in the soil, have therefore to make a constant adjustment to variable circumstances. For that adjustment, a purposeful mind is necessary, and the light of intellect, which has been given to them, helps them on their journey to race perpetuation.

Men also have this light. Through the intellect, they also try to get better and better opportunity for themselves and for future generations. Furthermore, the social qualities which they possess also help them to promote the well-being of future generations. Like the wolves which hunt in packs, and still more like the bees which live for the hive, human beings, in order to live a powerful life and to give the boon of a successful life to their descendants, mutilate a large number of individuals and compel them to live imperfect lives as soliders, or as money-makers. This desire,—that their progeny may enjoy a power which can be bought by money, the power to have slaves working for them,—is the same instinct as that of the animals.

But in human beings has been further evolved a sense of the Infinite which goes far beyond the race for physical life, that merely occupies extended time and extended space. Man has realised that a life of perfection is not merely a life of extension, but one which has its enjoyment of the beautiful. His life has become quite different from that of the pack and that which works for the hive. It alone appears to be conscious of the sublimity of goodness.

After we evolved this sense of the beautiful, of the good, of something that we call truth,—which is deeper and greater than any number of facts,—we have come into an altogether different atmosphere from that wherein the animals and trees have their

realisation. But we have come into this higher realm only very lately.

Ages and ages have passed, dominated by the life of what we call the self, which is intent upon seeking food and shelter and upon the perpetuation of the race. This latter existence is really the existence of death; for death is its natural and complete termination. But there is a mysterious region, which does not entirely acknowledge its loyalty to physical claims. Its mystery is constantly troubling us and we have not become fully at ease in this region. We call it *spiritual*. That word is vague, only because we have not yet been able to realise its meaning completely.

We are groping in the dark, and as yet we are ignorant of the complete truth which is at the centre of this world. Nevertheless, through the dim light, which reaches us across the barriers of our physical existence, we seem to have a stronger faith in this spiritual life than in the physical. For even those who do not believe in the truth which we cannot define, but call by the name of *spirit*, are obliged to behave as though they did believe and thought it true, or, at any rate, truer than the world which is evident to our senses. And so even they, very often, are willing to accept death,—which is a termination of this physical life,—in the cause of the true, the good and the beautiful.

If this truth, beauty and goodness are worth the final sacrifice, which for us is life, then they must have some objective foundation. They cannot be a mere product of our imagination, a sort of make-believe idea. This immense force of truth, beauty, and goodness, which is exercising its influence upon the human world, must be acknowledged and we must try to know its character. Just as, when we discover some great fundamental law of this material world, a new vista of knowledge and power is at once opened out to us, whereby we may attain greater freedom in this material world and make a more perfect adjustment of our life to our surroundings in this

universe, in the same manner, when men discover some great principle of the spiritual world, at once there opens out before them the vista of the life of perfection. It gives them the power to live fully in the world which we call the spiritual world.

We know that primitive men dimly believed in some universal power which guided their destiny. But this power had in it no principle either of the good, or of the beautiful. It merely represented unlimited energy, from which we could derive benefit, if only we could discover how to communicate with it. It had in it no power of beneficence, but was an active principle of will, which did good or bad merely by chance or whim, as our earthly lords used to do in former times, and may still do even now. This was an hypothesis, like any scientific hypothesis, and it did help them to some extent. It enabled them to curb their own desires and to put a limit upon lives of unbridled licence, because they were afraid of a higher power. That setting up of the system of control was itself something quite different from what the animals possessed; but it was a bypath that did not lead them very far. It was antagonistic to that which was highest in man, so that his deities became more evil in their violence than he himself naturally was. For, this sight of power, which could inflict pain with impunity upon others, had a terrible fascination for primitive man.

The society that was evolved through this primitive idea of religion was never a great society. But evolution did not stop there. I need not here go into details as to the course that evolution took in the realm of the spirit. What we have to think of to-day, on Christmas Day, is the fact of the personality of this great Master, who has given us a creative idea, opening out before our vision a new vista of truth.

Let me now try to be more definite about the spiritual world.

I am not a scientist, but I believe this material world is built of light; that matter, in its ultimate stage, is Light. Any-

how, the material world has for its source *movement*,—which is the same as light. The sun, the stars,—they are the keepers, the reservoir, of that which gives the planets the inspiration to move and to be moulded into a variety of things. This movement is the response to Light of the light that lives within the boundary of form.

But we know that this world of beauty, goodness and truth has other qualities besides those of matter. I am inclined to call this the world of personality. For it is the personal man, who is conscious of truth, beauty and goodness. Not only is he conscious of them, but his personality is strengthened and enriched through a realisation of all that is true, good and beautiful. This world of personality must also have its eternal foundation, just as the material world has for its foundation, light. And it is almost a truism to say, that the fundamental light of this world of personality is Love.

The most intense consciousness of our own personality comes to us through Love, through a realisation of unity with others, which illumines our hearts with a radiance of joy. The greatest masters in the West, as in the East, had their spiritual vision fully developed, and thus were able to realise this infinite world of personality bathed in the light of eternal Love. For Love is the principle of the spiritual world, the principle of unity, which in India has been considered to be the character of the Infinite, and termed *Advaitam*.

The realisation of this principle of unity gives us the power which leads to our fulfilment in the spiritual world. Christ through his own intimate realisation of this Love, made it easy for us who believe in him to have faith in it, and through that faith, to lead a true life in the inner world which he calls the Kingdom of Heaven.

He it was who placed the utmost emphasis upon the idea of the Fatherhood of God. That is, in this infinite world of personality, which is a spiritual world, he realised the supremacy of the personal Being, as Our Father,—a supreme

Being, who is not alien to us, but whose nature is our own. So our relationship with this Being is not what our primitive ancestors believed it to be,—that of master and slave. They never had any intimacy of spiritual ties. Their relationship with God, being merely an external fact, carried with it the element of fear and of abject humiliation. It was devoid of that freedom which can only be gained in love. Christ preached of freedom when he preached that a father's love was the supreme truth for human beings.

In our country the Vaishnavas have their own idea of that love which rules the spiritual life. For them the highest idea of love is that which is represented in the love between man and woman. Love is intense there also, for through our differences we are constantly realising an intimacy of unity, a unity which represents an equal independence of love on both sides, a unity which gives us a dignity that is of immense value to God himself and offers us the highest right to be. All this is true, and yet there is something lacking in this relationship, namely the complete ethical element.

But if we acknowledge our relationship of father and son to be true, then we must acknowledge our moral responsibility to our fellow beings, who thereby become our brothers. To acknowledge a father has no meaning at all, if we do not recognise his children. Father and child are the two poles of a truth which is indivisible.

We find that, of all religions, Christianity has developed most strongly this moral significance of spiritual truth. So, through the personality and teaching of Christ, this recognition of the principle of Love, as the centre of our spiritual life, has been made concrete, through love's service in the human world. Our duty towards those who are children with us of the One Father is a part of it. We can never ignore it, if we want to be perfect. The love between the Infinite Soul and the individual soul has for its content love for all human beings. This has

been a vital truth which the Master preached, not through words, but through his life and death.

This truth is more needed to-day than at any other time. By an irony of fate, those who call themselves disciples of Christ have become the worst sinners in creating divisions of race, and in building walls of pride and exclusiveness. They have deliberately cultivated the spirit of contempt and hatred for those who differ from themselves. In fact, they have made use even of the Christian religion of love to indulge in their sectarian pride. This makes it difficult for them to feel a genuine love for those who have different forms of religion.

If they had never been given an ideal, and had lived accordingly, it would have been less heinous for them to adopt the lower life of self-aggrandisement. But to acknowledge truth and be traitor to it, is the worst sin of all. This treason can never be excused, and we now feel that the so-called Christian world is going through a career of calamity, which may end in its destruction, because of this enormous burden of treason against truth, wherein it has been indulging with the spirit of pride and defiance. It has acknowledged the law of matter for the sake of gaining power, but not the responsibility of the spirit for the fulfilment of Life.

Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das.

Man truly reveals himself through
is gift, and the best gift that
hittaranjan has left for his countrymen
not any particular political or
ocial programme, but the creative
rce of a great aspiration that has
aken a deathless form in the sacrifice
hich his life represented.

Rabindranath Tagore

There are sufferings about which the question comes to our mind whether we deserve them. We must frankly acknowledge that explanations are not offered to us. So it does not help us in the least to complain, let us rather be worthy of the challenge thrown to us by them. That we have been wounded is a fact which can be ignored, but that we have been brave is a truth of the highest importance. For the former belongs to the outer world of cause and effect, while the latter belongs to the world of spirit.

—Rabindranath.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN.

I

The late Principal S. K. Rudra.

News has just reached us on going to press of the death of Principal S. K. Rudra after a long and painful illness at Solon in the Simla Hills. He had been suffering for two years past from an incurable disease, but the end came unexpectedly. Principal Rudra was one of the early supporters of Visva-bharati and was nominated by the Founder-President, Rabindranath Tagore, as a member of the Samsad (Governing Body) among the names on the first list in the original Schedule. He was a well-known figure in the Asram where he stayed as a welcome guest on many occasions. On certain visits, in the earlier days, he took classes in the school to the great delight of the boys; and more than once delivered sermons in the *Mandir* and helped the Asram in other ways. He was always devoted to the ideals of the Founder, and his loss will be felt by every member of the Governing Body and the Teachers and by others in the Asram who knew him. In our next number we hope to have a memorial article about him from our Vice-President, C. F. Andrews, who was his closest friend.

II

Rabindranath's Last Tour.

Interview by the Free Press of India.

Q: May I request you to enlighten me as to the object of your recent Continental tour, the cause of its abrupt termination and your future plans.

A.: This tour could not be completed owing to my illness. I had undertaken it in response to an invitation that came from Peru, when I was in Japan. I was invited to join the centenary celebrations of the Independence of South America. I had long entertained a desire to visit South America and compare that continent with North America. These two countries represent different types of races and culture. South America is Latin in its stock and culture while North America is Anglo-Saxon. My idea was to see what was the difference in the mentality of

the people. So I accepted with pleasure the invitation to go to Peru It was an agreeable surprise to me to learn, by the very fact of the invitation, that I was not only not unknown in that distant part of the world, but sufficiently known to make my presence on a national occasion desirable. I went first to Europe, where I stayed for about a week, and then sailed for my destination. I fell ill during the sea voyage.

At Buenos Aires.

When we landed at Buenos Aires in the Argentine, I had to consult a doctor who advised me not to take the risk of a journey to Peru in my state of health. The people of Buenos Aires were very kind to me. A special house was given to me in a delightful spot on the bank of a great river. I stayed there for nearly six weeks, but never had an opportunity to appear before the public or to lecture. In spite of my enforced seclusion, the people of Buenos Aires continued to show their sustained interest in me. They came to me at all hours in groups just for a sight of me and a brief conversation, if possible. I was assured by all of them that, although I was not able to satisfy their desire to take part in public functions or lecture to them, they considered it a pleasure and a privilege to have me in their midst.

In Italy.

I then left for Italy hoping that the sea voyage might improve my health. My first sojourn in Italy on this occasion was made at Milan. The reception that was given to me was most cordial and enthusiastic. The kindness I received at their hands was touching. Italy holds a great fascination for me. I always remember the fact of a number of poets from other lands having made Italy their second home. I also wanted to join the list, as the poets that preceded me had done, and derive inspiration from Italy. I promised the people of Milan to return to their midst as soon as I was better. I have now decided, health permitting, to go again to Italy and spend some months at some beautiful spot where I can rest in the inspiring beauty of natural scenery and come into touch with the living minds of the West.

His work in the West.

Q.: Can you enlighten me as to the particular aspect of your work or teaching that appealed especially to the West?

A.: It is difficult to answer. I take it that the interest of the West in me is not confined to any part of my work, but extends to all my activities as educationist, poet and religious thinker. First I found it difficult to believe that people in South America would be acquainted with my work. Afterwards I learnt that they had read my works in Spanish translations and that they had a real admiration for them. It was a revelation to me to find that a large number of South Americans, who were on board the steamer on which I was travelling and were bound for their home, were carrying many of my books along with them. It gave me the feeling that I had won my place in their hearts. I had the same experience at Milan also.

Cultural Unity.

Q.: Can you explain to me more fully the purpose and method of your mission of cultural unity?

A.: My idea is to establish contact with the whole world. In my view, India should not remain in utter obscurity. We should be able to take our part in helping the world in her present situation and occupy an honoured place in the reconstruction of civilization. I also know that the West is eager to know the East and specially India and to seek help from the store of wisdom which has come to us from ancient times. It is our duty in India to fulfil these expectations. I hope the movement of Visva-bharati will help to bring India out from her spiritual and intellectual segregation into contact with the West. This is the one service I can render to my Motherland. We have to know that in the modern age the problems of each country are parts of the world-problem. No country to-day can live segregated. And until we Indians find our true place in this greater world we shall remain obscure and neglected, and there will be no chance of our real civilization asserting itself in our own life or making its contribution to the world progress.

Q.: How do you propose to achieve your object?

A.: Since I have been able to win a place in the heart of the world outside India, I feel a responsibility born of this special position. I want to take advantage of this and open a channel of communication that would link India with other countries. India should be linked both with the East and the West. It is for that purpose that I travelled to China and Japan. As a result of my visit to those far Eastern countries, something has been accomplished towards the fulfilment of this object. I have also been

seeking to attempt a similar contact with the Western countries, and my contention is that if I succeed in however meagre a measure, I shall have done something which would not be without permanent results.

East and West.

Q.: Do you think that your hopes of cultural unity are shared by your countrymen?

A.: I do not know. I have poured out my life and never spared myself. Everything both moral and material which was in my power to give in the service of my country has been given. Now I aspire to complete the cycle both individually and as a son of India. Like my namesake (*Ravi,* the Sun) I had my rise in the East and the cycle has to be completed by my life and work in the West. It is my hope that in the latter end of my days I shall be able to comprehend the Western countries and that such comprehension may fit in with my own mission in life.

Q.: Do you think that in any scheme of life the West and the East, with their seemingly conflicting interests and cultures, can fit in harmoniously with each other?

A.: Yes, I think they can. When geographical boundaries were real, the different peoples developed unity among themselves. Those people who formed such bond of unity came to be great. They were great in their literature, science and arts. Those who fought against such unity, sooner or later perished and went down in the scale of civilization. Conditions have now changed. It is no longer individuals who have met together within geographical limits. Different human races have come together, closer than ever before, owing to easier communication, and this nearness must be developed into a living and real fellowship. Until all the races of the world become fully conscious of their unity—the unity of interests and culture—there can be no lasting peace. The fulfilment of the mission of world unity depends upon the realisation of this great truth by mankind.

The Poet's last gift.

Through Visva-bharati I endeavour to give expression to the truth of the indivisible entity of the human race. This institution is going to be my last gift to my country. I hope it will be accepted. I also hope India may have reason to be proud of the fact that this message of world-unity first took shape on her soil. It is this expression of truth and nothing

more, the expression of faith in the ideal of human oneness and the divinity in man, that Visva-bharati seeks to achieve. This is also the Truth which the great utterances of our Upanishads preach and it is the special spiritual mission of India to give expression to this Truth by precept and practice and to secure its acceptance by the whole world. This is the voice of India and the voice of Truth.

"Action is thy care."

Q.: Do you not think that your efforts are premature and you are attempting the impossible?

A.: Does not the Gita warn us: "Action is thy care, not the fruits thereof."

It is the effort that counts and not the result. I do not know whether my efforts will have any effect, nor do I seek to know. I know it is the truth and I know that Truth has to be asserted against all contradictions. Only Action is our duty,—not the greed of Results. I know that it can be said that my message has not been fully accepted by my country. Not that I have not struggled for the co-operation of my countrymen in my work. I have sought acceptance of my work at their hands. But I have not so far fully succeeded in enlisting their active support. This does not discourage me. The fact that the vision of Truth has been seen and testimony has been borne to it even by a few seekers after truth, is enough for me.

India's Segregation.

Q.: Do you not recognize that the practical difficulties in the way of India accepting your message are great, specially in view of the complications arising from her political subjection?

A.: Yes. I do recognise that the difficulties in the way of our countrymen accepting the message of world-unity are very great. But what counts is not the difficulty. In any great cause, there are bound to be seemingly insurmountable obstacles. What I deplore is, not so much the lack of progress and practical achievement in the direction of the ideal as the inertia and apathy even to visualize the possibilities of such an ideal. India is suffering from the effects of segregation. It seems exceedingly difficult for us to see things in their proper perspective. We have no right background, against which to place our own experiences in the different

departments of life. It is this that makes our national values and efforts so petty and futile as to shut out all possibilities of our spiritual expansion. The process of enlightenment is so difficult in this country owing to our poverty of mind. We do not lack in intelligence. We are spiritual by temperament and race, and there can be no excuse for the utilitarain tendency of our national life. I do recognize that our system of education, the system of administration, and a number of extraneous causes, have all contributed to our degeneracy. I do not blame our people, but I do feel that we have lost and continue to lose faith in ideals and are becoming more and more utilitarian and materialistic, I would even say, more materialistic than the West.

Our Materialism.

Q.: Do you really maintain that we are more materialistic than the West?

A.: Yes, in the broad sense of the term. What is materialism, if it is not the formalism that dominates our religion? The belief that external observances have spiritual meanings, is that not a materialistic view? Is it not materialistic to believe that sin can be washed away by water, or dust from people's feet? The fact is, our country comprises a multitude of races in various stages of development acting and inter-acting on each other, until our average standard has gone down.

India's Handicap.

Further, we have a mill-stone round our neck,—the complex social organism which came by its existence purely as a device to regulate the inter-relationship of different groups of our people at varying stages of development. This has now taken root as a part of religion and imparted sanctity even to our dividing castes. The continuance of our old social organism, after it had ceased to have any meaning or purpose has helped to raise walls around us, to perpetuate our differences and to offer permanent obstacles to our inherent natural tendency to unite. The artificial barriers which divide us can be overcome only if we cultivate the will to overcome them; for these artificial barriers, can have no permanence except with our concurrence and complicity. Our real difficulty is the mixing up of the fact of these barriers with the religious conception that they are rightly there, that they had always been and always must be there. I cannot think

of a greater anachronism than the belief, deliberately cultivated in the name of religion, that, from the beginning of beginnings, the Lord of all creation has instituted our differences as an abiding factor, which no course of evolution can change. This handicap is peculiar to our country.

III.

Mr. Andrews' Address at Sylhet Students' Conference.

The moment the invitation came to me to address the students of the Surma Valley, I was very eager to accept it, because I have the pleasantest memories of the gathering at Nowgong when I presided over the Assam Student's Conference more than a year ago. I have also a very deep and abiding affection for the Assamese people and a realisation of the great future which lies before those who inhabit these two beautiful valleys. Furthermore, for a long time past, I have been very deeply engaged in the Opium Question which has affected the Assamese race more than any other race in India and which even at the present time is creating untold misery in the Northern Valley of Assam. True your own district is only slightly contaminated as yet by the opium habit, yet when a neighbouring house is burning all the houses round it are in danger, and when the opium habit has lighted the fire close to your own borders it is only common sense and common prudence on your part to do your utmost to avoid any further conflagration. But not merely does common sense dictate such a policy. Far more than this, the love of humanity and the desire to do good to your fellow beings who have fallen into great misery owing to the opium habit, should spur you on to take every step possible to rescue them in their distress and by helping them to help also yourselves.

One further reason has brought me eagerly to accept your own invitation to address you on this occasion as President. As you all know, I have been very deeply interested all my life in labour questions. Indeed, I have studied them in every part of the world, and with the utmost possible care. This I have done, not from the point of view of labour alone but also from the point of view of capital, realising as I do that in the mutual harmony of both interests lies the greatest incentive to progress and the greatest happiness for the poor.

Furthermore the whole question of recruiting labour has engaged my most serious attention for a period of nearly 13 years, and I have been

obliged to go to such distant places as South Africa, Fiji, and Malaya in order to find out how far the system of recruiting has been successful and how far it has been a failure. For this and many other reasons it has been my earnest desire to make a study of the conditions of labour in the tea gardens of Assam and I hope that it may be possible for me to do this in some measure before I leave.

It is not, however, primarily concerning those things that I wish to speak to you on the present occasion ; for you yourselves, who meet me here, are young students, and your work for the welfare of your fellowmen, whether social or political lies rather in the future when you are grown to full manhood, than in the present when you are learning those habits and experiences which may lead to a valuable and self-denying life in the future. What you yourselves especially wish to hear from me at this Conference is the way in which you may build up your own lives from the very first, on such a solid foundation of goodness and unselfishness that they may be a help and a blessing to your country and to humanity in the days to come. You have to fashion inwardly your characters and to get now the inspiration which shall keep you firm and strong in will and purpose for your work of the future. You have to gain within your souls that vital fire of religion, which shall never die out, but always keep burning, night and day, throughout the rest of your lives. You have to learn so to concentrate your minds on the object that you may accomplish useful and effective work instead of merely dissipating your energies in a thousand useless ways. You have to become 'one pointed' in all your energies and occupations, so that when your lives are over men may be able to say that you have done nobly and well and have truly helpped humanity.

What then, is the secret of life? What is the spiritual power which can give you this concentration of purpose. What is the "Shakti" which shall create within a living force that can never die but will remain immortal even beyond the day when your body dies. This is the one question, which I want to discuss with you this afternoon and if I can give you that secret, then it will be worth all the rest of our work at this conference put together. I shall feel that I have done something for you, which may abide as a blessing both to yourselves and to humanity for many long years to come.

I have called it a secret ; but what I am going to tell you this afternoon is really the simplest thing in the world, which has been understood

instinctively by simple people all the world over, whenever and wherever men are unselfish and eager to devote their lives for the good of others.

When I was quite young, I was told by my mother the Golden Rule of life, to 'love my God with all my heart and soul and to love my neighbour as myself.' She used to impress upon me that this was the whole duty of man, and that all the years of my own life would not be too long to seek to fulfil it. When I grew older, I used to puzzle over the last part of the Golden Rule, and I had never fully understood it until I came out to India. For I used to ask myself ; 'How can one love another person just in the same way that one loves one's own self? I used to take the phrase 'as myself' to mean to love other people "like" myself ; and taking the word in that sense, I could not feel that this was quite strong enough. For instance, my own mother loved me evidently "more" than she loved herself. Was that extravagant love of my mother for me, her child, wrong? Was it a breach of the Golden Rule? Ought she to draw a line somewhere in the extravagance of her love? Somehow, this idea of limited love used to vex me, and I had an unquiet feeling about this quantitative stand-point of love. But when I came out to India, the truth was suddenly revealed to me through the Upanishads, that I did not know truly the meaning of the original passage in my own scriptures. The true meaning was this: That I should love my neighbour as myself, because he truly 'was' myself. There was, therefore, no mere limited measure of love, no mere likeness between him and me, but "identity." I found this all worked out most beautifully in Swami Vivekananda's writings. He said: "the One Divine Spirit is the same Spirit, who dwells in each one of us, and is in very truth the Self in each of us" "Do you see," he asked, "that beggar there? He is God manifest in the flesh: he is the same Spirit, essentially that is in you and me and God. When you love him, you love God ; and when you serve him, you serve God ; and through serving God in him, you realise not only God in him, but God in your own self. For the God in you is Advaitam, the Undivided, the One without the second. God is in him. God is in you.

Thus my neighbour is myself. There is no barrier at all: He and I are one. It was Christ who said: "I and my Father are one." He also prayed for his disciples, that they might be one in him as he was one with his father. Here it is all identity. This is the vital truth of love and the secret of all service to humanity. If we stand above any one as a superior and patronise him, then that service is useless. If we stand out-

side him, and think of ourselves as like him, then that service does not go far enough. If, however, we identify ourselves with the lowliest of our brethren, suffering when they suffer and rejoicing when they rejoice, then our service is perfeet.

I heard only recently a very beautiful story about the saint Ramkrishna Paramahamsa, how when he had realised this supreme truth of the Advaitam, and wished to carry it out in action, he used to go out at night time and do the sweepers' work in the neighbouring places, removing the very filthiest things and the most repulsive, in order that he might truly identify himself with the sweeper and not merely talk about unity. The true Christian service is of the same character. Christ said: "If any one gives a cup of water in my name, he shall be blessed." And again he said: "I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me water to drink; inasmuch as you did it to one of the very lowest of my brethren, you did it unto me." Here again the identity is so absolute that the starving man, the thirsting man is Christ; the man to whom a cup of water is given is Christ. Christ does not here talk about loving any one in a limited way. He absolutely identifies himself with the lowliest and the lost, and then asks for our love.

Now you have learnt from me the secret I wanted to tell you. If you can realize this unity, if you can understand this doctrine of practical Vedanta,—that, which the Sufis call the Unity and the Christians call the indwelling Christ, then you will find a wonderful spiritual power, a wonderful Shakti which will transform your whole life. You will not feel disgust and repulsion when you see a poor man, or a poor woman or a poor child in misery. You will rather experience intense undivided sympathy and attraction. Your whole being will go out towards identification. You will feel, "It is impossible for me to have my comfort, and for this poor one, who is truly myself, to have discomfort." Nay, the very discomfort of the poor one whom you see in misery will become your own discomfort until it is relieved. The sympathy as we call it, will grow so intense, that it will not let you rest night or day unless you come to its relief.

There is a noble saying of St. Paul about the unity of the members of the body. He says: "where one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it: and where one member is honoured all the members rejoice with it." He is speaking there in a parable about human society, and the parable of the body is a very perfect one. We know how a pain in one

limb of the body causes pain to other limbs. If I cut my finger, the pain goes right through my body. But perfect though this parable of the body is, it is not so great and perfect as that wonderful word of identity in the Upanishads 'Tatvam Asi.' "Thou art that." For while the limbs of the body are material the "Atman" is immaterial ; while it takes some fraction of time for pain or joy to travel from one part of the body to another, it takes no fraction of time at all for spirit to mingle with spirit, and for sympathy to be expressed.

Sometimes we read in novels of 'love at first sight', meaning that one flash of recognition of two kindred souls creates love ; but if we practise this doctrine of the Advaitam, then love at first sight will be a daily experience. The flash of recognition of my spirit in my neighbour and his spirit in me will be inevitable.

One young student from the South of India wrote to me that he had read in a newspaper, what I had spoken about *Advaitam* and that he had joined one of the Ramkrishna Missions at once in order to put it into practice. He told me that his life had been filled with joy ever since, and that he had been learning the lesson more carefully day by day.

I am not asking you to leave your college studies and join any mission at this time, though in that exceptional circumstance the young student may have been right to leave his. I am rather asking you to find out this truth in the place here in the Surma Valley, where you are living to-day. I would ask you definitely to find it out by living with this kindred sympathy, this identity of truest love to your fellow students. Let the Hindu student love the Mussalman and the Christian and the Mussalman love the Hindu and the Christian, and the Christian love both also. Let them do this, not by going out of the way, but here on this spot, by practising the *Advaitam.*

There is a wonderful story told by the poet Rabindranath Tagore about his own illumination. One early morning, just as the sun was rising and he was looking at the palm trees waving in the light of dawn, the veil of separation seemed to be entirely withdrawn, and he knew himself to be one with every creature in the universe. He saw the cow in the street licking its calf and the sight of that tenderness of mother's love made his heart well up with a fountain of tears of joy. He saw the student in the street placing his arms upon the shoulder of his fellow-student tenderly, and again the whole fountain of his being welled up with love and tenderness. All through the wonderful days that followed, this identity of

himself with every living creature was not with him an abstract theory, but a practical reality. He did things which he could never have done before. People who were before disgusting to him were now seen in their true light and he loved them with a passionate love. His days and nights were filled with love of God and man, and the vision did not pass away or become faded. Then his elder brother said to him: "Let us go together up to Darjeeling, where you may see the great mountains with their eternal snows." He eagerly thought that this wonderful radiance of sympathy and love which he had experienced would be increased by going up to the hills and seeing the most magnificent sights in the world ; but when he got there instead of increasing, the vision began to fade away. Thus he learnt that it is not by deserting our posts or by leaving our daily duty or going away from the dull routine of life that God is found, but rather that He is found where each one of us is placed to do our daily task, and that the footstool where God's feet rest is among the poorest, lowliest and the lost.

How I wish I could give to you each one at the beginning of your own lives that vision of the *Advaitam,* which the poet saw ; how I wish I could draw away from your young eyes, the veil of Maya which separates us from one another ; how I wish I could make you see the face of Christ my Master, as he says to every one of us: "Inasmuch as you have done it to these very lowest of my brethren, you have done it unto Me." If only I could do this then indeed I should be happy ; then indeed my visit to this Surma Valley would be a blessing that might continue, and bear fruit in the years to come.

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